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THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS



SELF PORTRAIT
(1920)

THE
SCULPTOR SPEAKS

JACOB EPSTEIN

TO

ARNOLD L. HASKELL

A series of conversations on Art

GARDEN CITY NEW YORK
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Dedicated by the Author to
MRS. JACOB EPSTEIN

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INTRODUCTION

I CANNOT in this introduction explain Epstein, and in his own conversation Epstein cannot and does not attempt to explain himself. The French painter Vlaminck summed up the situation admirably when he said:

“La bonne peinture c’est comme de la bonne cuisine, ça se goûte mais ça ne s’explique pas.”

We can only hint. His work is there for all to see. It is extremely unlikely that this book will convert anyone to the view held by the writer of this introduction that Jacob Epstein, almost alone in the world to-day, holds the secret of true beauty, and that his work like all things truly beautiful will endure without relying in any way upon fashion for its appreciation.

It may well be that so positive a statement of belief at the very beginning of this study does my subject a disservice in the eyes of the reader not prepared to follow me to such lengths, or who may well already be in positive and violent disagreement with me. But I have reached my conclusion after very many years and a close study of all the work, and I am therefore unwilling to state it in a more

INTRODUCTION

subtle and roundabout manner, were that possible. There is altogether too much vague and inconclusive writing on art, and enthusiasm is too often carefully hidden under a mass of so-called technical jargon. I am not prepared to call every work of the sculptor a masterpiece, just because it is signed "Epstein"; to do that would most surely infuriate the artist, and under such conditions this book would never have been written. But my position with regard to Epstein's vision is clear, and I stress it fully conscious of the risk of losing sympathy at the outset.

But I can perhaps by this portrait of Jacob Epstein, and through his own recorded conversations, show what manner of man he is, and at any rate do something to break down the illusion, that even a cursory study of his work should dispel immediately, that Epstein is an isolated rebel, a bitter and avowed enemy of all that is the past.

In truth Epstein almost alone is in the straight line of real tradition, not the confectioners of those depressing rows of frozen mutton that yearly disfigure Academy and Salon. They have dropped behind and are still coquetting with fifth century Greece, oblivious of the birth of Donatello and Michael Angelo or of the discoveries in Egypt and Africa, while Epstein, sincere student and even worshipper of the past, goes on to create the future.

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Yet how many people can only see him as the caricaturist Low has depicted him, as a figure with a paint-brush smearing the statues of Greece, like the vandals who have so treated his own work. Epstein was the first to protest against the shameful restoration of works in the British Museum, against the official theory that Demeter would be better with any old nose rather than with no nose at all.*

Epstein is not a modernist in the sense that he desires to attenuate the feeling of a work into abstract form. As he himself once said:

“To my mind that phase has run its course, now that Fifth Avenue shops have taken it up. It comes from the Rue de la Paix, and is as uninteresting as its immediate successor that we see in art galleries. It is merely the last word in *chic* and nothing more. It has now become applied art, and no middle class home will be complete without this radiator or telephone sculpture soon.”†

I once heard him apply the term ‘modernist art’ to the vacuum cleaner standing in the corner. Epstein is in the direct tradition, far more of a conservative than the casual critic, with his set ideas and customary misunderstanding of the Greeks could

* See p. 145

† Interview with Walter Tittle. *American World's Work*, Feb., 1928.

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ever realise. But Epstein does not believe, like Sir Reginald Blomfield, that the history of sculpture began with Pheidias.

Epstein has had constantly to suffer the criticism of the totally incompetent, and yet this does not seem to have struck people as being in any way incongruous. Even a judge noted for his humour, which to some might seem in doubtful taste at times, and for his slight verse, has dared to indulge in a little mild art criticism. Yet it is safe to say that if Epstein criticised one of his judgments, or even a piece of that very minor verse, astonishment and indignation would have been universal. Art in England occupies a curious position, which becomes very obvious when one realises what would occur, should a simple layman have the temerity to launch a bitter attack on a cricket eleven chosen to represent this country against Australia. Indeed, for every quarter-column in the papers devoted to art gossip, there are at least five or six columns devoted to highly critical matter about some sport or other, written by an expert. The public would not tolerate anything amateurish here. There is no question of blaming the newspapers for this. It obviously pays them, but it is a certain indication of the position occupied by art. Only an Epstein can command the space of a county cricket sensation, but with the great difference that in his case the



SUNITA

(Charcoal Drawing. In the possession of Arnold L. Haskell)

INTRODUCTION

treatment is very far from expert.

I do not wish for a moment to give the impression that Epstein resents all criticism or even all publicity; but, like every one of us, he resents abuse, when he does not ignore it, and especially abuse of a personal nature, where his sincerity is called into question by persons ignorant of the work or the man. Such abuse reached libellous lengths during the showing of *Genesis*, and, while no artist can hope for universal appreciation, it would be but a poor compliment to his work, he can at least expect disapproval to be tempered with honesty and good manners.

There are many reasons why Epstein should be the centre of continual controversy, in spite of the fact that he would do anything to avoid sensation. One of the general reasons that makes for his unpopularity, a fact shared by all progressive artists, is the glamour of the words 'old master.' It is generally imagined that all great art is concentrated in certain periods, kept very carefully within the limits of those periods, and that all artists worthy of praise or attention are termed 'old masters' or directly copy them. This goes far deeper than mere 'art snobbery.' The whole 'old master cult' is one gigantic bluff. It is impossible to label periods in a perfectly fool-proof manner. Many pictures in the great museums of the world owe their place to no artistic

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merit, but merely because they are of historical interest, and many inferior works are praised and discussed when attributed to well-known masters, only to be forgotten when a Berlin professor says that it is again only a case of 'scuola.' The worship of a picture merely on account of its date, and the fact that it has been praised by the professors, has robbed the public of any real discrimination, and has prejudiced people against their contemporaries, where they are forced to grant their own certificates of merit. An exhibition of Crivelli held in a Bond Street gallery to-day would be met by a frantic outburst of abuse, while in a museum he is accepted and praised.

This problem existed in the hey-day of the Italian Renaissance, for Vasari in his biography of Michael Angelo administers a rebuke to the art snobs that applies to the present age just as it stands:

" . . . If a modern work be equal to the ancient, wherefore not value it as highly, for is it not a mere vanity to think more of the name than the fact." Although it is the fashion to decry him, Vasari is one of the most sane and certainly the most readable of critics. Even his anecdotes, which may often be lacking in accuracy, illuminate his whole period.

It is an error to imagine that an arbitrary line can be drawn at any period in history, a boundary between great art and mediocrity. Certain periods

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have been more fertile than others, but the masters have been always with us. The last generation gave us Renoir, Cézanne and Van Gogh, as great as any of their predecessors, whom they and their followers alone understood and in whose name they were cursed by the ignorant.

That is the handicap with which the artist of to-day has to start.

A particular reason for the violent emotions aroused by Epstein's work lies in the fact that it imprints itself vividly on the imagination and refuses to be ignored. It causes the artistically lazy, ~~whose sense of beauty has become atrophied by the~~ banal, to readjust their values, which naturally they resent. They are moved, they must be moved deeply to feel and to act as they do, but they prefer the comfort of their former placid state, where 'they knew very definitely what they liked' or what they should like.

Thomas Mann in *The Magic Mountain*, to me the greatest novel of our times, while discussing a 14th century Pietà, says:

"Works of art whose function it is to express the soul and the emotions are always so ugly as to be beautiful, and so beautiful as to be ugly; that is the rule."

It is for these reasons that many inferior imitators of Epstein, who have merely seized upon certain

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aspects of his less personal work, but have been devoid of his vital personality, his almost uncanny technique and his sense of the beautiful, and not of the pretty or merely elegant, have secured an easy success with groups of young intellectuals who like to patronise modernity without in any way having their feelings moved. These artists, accepted for the time being, will be forgotten most certainly to-morrow.

The reason why to-day Epstein's name is known by many who have never heard of any other contemporary sculptor, is not merely because he has been the centre of so much futile controversy, but because it is impossible even for the most untrained to see his work without a strong reaction, which is a test of all great art. Mere eccentricity is not sufficient to produce such a reaction. Francis Picabia, an 'enfant terrible' of the Paris school, has produced many works in unusual media—matchsticks, hairpins and buttons; but beyond laughter, and a little praise from those who must be '*dans le mouvement*,' the works have quickly been forgotten.

I must insist that there is nothing of the eccentric about Epstein, unless genius be eccentric. He is essentially sane, thinking in terms of his medium, feeling but reasoning. Wild inspiration from Heaven, if possible in any art, is certainly an im-

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possibility in sculpture. Epstein himself will tell in these conversations of the process that goes on in the sculptor's mind, and of the deliberation behind all his work. "No one can explain a work of art, least of all the artist," but he can and does here explain some of the technical details, which will cause many amateur art critics who talk in abstract terms to revise their judgment. His talk for instance on some of the reasons for his bold treatment of Rima, apart from the actual conception, is of extreme importance.

I have treated Epstein at some length as the centre of drama, so that the very fact that it is impossible to draw a dramatic picture of Epstein, the man, seems out of place. To the man in the street the very name is synonymous with sensation; he sees him as a wild frightening bogey man ready to destroy all that he fondly imagines he holds sacred in art. In this case publicity has centred on a man who has never lent himself in any way to self-advertisement, who on the contrary is retiring and exceedingly difficult to approach and to discover, save through a common love of art. He is modest without in any way ignoring his position in art. This book will not show an Epstein who has carefully sat for his portrait, but Epstein as he actually is. He possesses an extremely fine sense of humour that has kept him free from any bitterness and above

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the petty jealousies of the art world. With Epstein his work alone counts. There is about him a certain quietness and serenity, a balance and an absolute sanity that would surprise the many who admire him, yet misunderstand him to such an extent as to see in him a wilful and perverse genius. It is a popular saying that genius is akin to madness, but a very wrong one. For one Van Gogh, who at any rate was supremely sane as far as his art was concerned, there are many such as Michael Angelo, Leonardo, Rembrandt, Rubens, Renoir and Rodin, who were from all evidences a good deal saner and more practical than the average business man, whose dreams are certainly less tangible.

I have never yet seen Epstein in a rage. On one occasion when the provocation was unusually strong I tried to incite him to violent action: "I have put all my violent energy into the work. There is none left for this stupid thing."

* * * *

It must be remembered that these conversations were spread over a considerable period. Epstein was not plied with questions in the manner of an expert witness. To have done so would have been to have lost sight of the man entirely. We talked of many things, of theatres, of cinemas and books. We gossiped and talked nonsense too. We laughed a



THE MADONNA AND CHILD
(1927)

INTRODUCTION

great deal. There were constant interruptions from friends in this hospitable house, and particularly pleasing ones from Peggy Jean. The thread of our conversation would thus be continually broken.

Epstein never seeks to make himself the centre of attention or to speak, like so many well-known people, as if he were addressing a large audience. He most certainly never holds forth for the length of some of the passages that follow. I have purposely made a continuous narrative from the chips of talk, and have to that extent misrepresented him, and have made an egotist of a modest man.

Finally there is another legend that will have to go with all the rest. It is that of Epstein as a grim, uncouth, truculent figure, who cannot understand anything beyond the merely technical side of his art. Such an illusion should have been dispelled at once by a glance at the spiritual Madonna and Child.

Epstein is a man of superior intelligence and culture, with a more than ordinary knowledge of music and literature. It is only the fact that he possesses an extremely balanced and logical mind that has prevented him from frittering away his time in controversy. On the rare occasions when he has appeared in print his letters have been models of conciseness, clear thinking and hard hitting.

For example take his refutation of the charge of

CHAPTER ONE

ON ART CRITICISM AND THE WRITING OF BOOKS

(THE scene is laid in the large living room. It is Sunday afternoon and the table is fully laid for the friends who will come in. On the walls and round the room are the many art treasures Epstein has accumulated. The only pictures on the walls are a vigorous series of paintings, flower pieces and nudes, by Matthew Smith. They are rich and glowing in colour, painting of a quality rare in what Epstein calls "this anæmic age." There are a few Epsteins, a head of his wife, some baby heads of Peggy Jean and the mask of Meum. Through the glass doors can be seen two large Marquesan idols. This is the scene of nearly all our conversations, though occasionally we may wander into the next room or across the corridor into the vast glass-covered studio, full of shrouded figures, to discuss some particular work.)

A. L. H. What is art?

EPSTEIN. I was once asked very much the same question by a judge in a New York court. A Mr.

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Steichen had bought Brancusi's well-known abstract work, *The Bird*. The United States customs refused to admit it as a work of art and charged 40 per cent. duty on it as a 'manufacture of metal.' Steichen protested, and I was called in as an expert witness. This is what happened, after a long preliminary enquiry as to my qualifications:

DISTRICT ATTORNEY. Are you prepared to call this a bird?

EPSTEIN. If the sculptor calls it a bird I am quite satisfied.

JUDGE. If you saw it in the forest would you shoot it?

EPSTEIN. That is not the only way to identify a bird.

JUDGE. Why is this a work of art?

EPSTEIN. Because it satisfies my sense of beauty. I find it a beautiful object.

JUDGE. So a highly polished, harmoniously curved brass rail could also be a work of art?

EPSTEIN. Yes, it could become so.

CUSTOMS OFFICER. Then a mechanic could have done this thing?

EPSTEIN. No, he could have polished it, but he never could have conceived it.

We finally won the case.

ON ART CRITICISM

A. L. H. Then you could not give a more comprehensive definition of art.

EPSTEIN. No, not one that would be of the slightest use. All I can say is what I told the judge, my own personal reaction. "This is a work of art because it satisfies my sense of beauty." No one can say much more.

A.L.H. I see the public is again suffering from what our friend Edwin Evans calls 'Rimaphobia.' You have been so grossly misrepresented over *Night and Morning* by both friends and enemies that I am surprised you don't write a book or a series of articles to prove how wrong they are. After all, even though you may not be able to make them understand or like your work, a knowledge of your aims would alter things.

EPSTEIN. I am quite used to 'Rimaphobia' by now, but I never let it worry me in the slightest. It is no good paying any attention to the opinions of the man in the street. A man who knew nothing about surgery would not be allowed to criticise a surgical operation. A man who knows nothing about sculpture should not criticise sculpture. Every seven years I have had some big public commission, and every seven years there is the identical outbreak with the same futile objections raised in the same hysterical manner. As for writing a book, as you suggest, I am a sculptor, not an author. My

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

sculpture is a sufficient explanation in itself, and my only aim in life. You write a book on me. You understand and feel my work, you will make less of a mess of it than most people. But don't make the mistake of thinking that a work of art can be explained. They even try to explain Cézanne, the humbugs. An art critic can only throw out hints. At the best he can tell something about the medium under discussion, and the circumstances under which a work was created. He has his place also as a historian of art. That is all. These are the limits of his activities. Within these limits they can be exceedingly valuable. If he attempts more he becomes misleading. Whistler has dealt magnificently with 'the professors' in his delightful *Gentle Art of Making Enemies*. There is no one with the spirit of Whistler to-day. They all kow-tow to publicity and run after the press.

The literary mind in England is on the whole frankly hostile to plastic art, however much an author may praise works of art in general. Have you noticed the tone in which novelists so often write of works of art? This is all easily understandable. The author, when he writes of art, seeks to explain what cannot possibly be explained in words, or to put it more clearly, what is already self-explanatory without the slightest need of his aid. He probably feels this, he knows that he must generalise round



"THE SERAPH"

(1924)

ON ART CRITICISM

his subject, hunt for his words only to find that they are inadequate, and he is annoyed at his own impotence. The less removed a work is from anecdote, the more baffled the author becomes, the more he tries to link it up with some anecdote, and he will finally vent his rage on the work of art itself and its unfortunate author, going on the lines that what he cannot fully understand must be rubbish. One or two pundits here who have written on Cézanne, would have amazed and infuriated the old man himself by their utterances. Cézanne was a realist, who thought in terms of canvas, paint and brush. Literature often interferes with what should be purely plastic art, though it has its place both in painting and sculpture. A great deal of the criticism of my work has come from writers or from those painters with a literary rather than a plastic turn of mind, a very common thing in England. After all the Hon. John Collier with his problem pictures is very nearly an author, very nearly——*

**Pictures "Explained."*

Amusing and pithy little "explanations" in the catalogue of each picture are a feature of the exhibition of portraits by the Hon. John Collier at a gallery in the Haymarket. "Refuses to be limited by his frame," is the footnote to a self-portrait in which one hand is grasping the frame of the picture.

"The artist has endeavoured to make a speaking likeness. He speaks so well," is the punning reference to a portrait of G. B. S.

* * * * *

Etonian Artist.

The Hon. John Collier is one of the few artists to be educated at Eton and will always be remembered for his problem pictures. —(From *Daily Mirror*, January 15th, 1930.)

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

People in England have a definitely literary mind. The conversation picture has had a very long life here. They expected anecdote with Rima; I gave them sculpture.

This definite literary bias, however mistaken it may be, is an integral part of the make-up of the English. Writing is the only art to-day that is taken seriously; speaking generally, music, painting and architecture have had their day. In the study and the practice of the plastic arts the literary viewpoint leads one most surely to wrong conclusions. The whole premises are false, but the end arrived at is an entirely honest one. Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelites were sincere beyond question. No one can doubt that Ruskin's indignation at Whistler's "nocturnes" was very genuine. But criticism here suffers from other faults less easily condoned, from the intrusion of hypocritical moral standards, jingoism and a desire to be "*dans le mouvement*," which results in feeble generalisation and a dread of uttering any definite opinion for fear of future developments. Better, far better, be magnificently wrong with gusto, far better to praise a Meissonier at the expense of a Cézanne, let us say, than to lump them both together, with many others, as "*agrecable* painters." That seems to be the vice of the book reviewer; incidentally it is the method of X.

I hear now that he intends to write a section on

ON ART CRITICISM

my work in his new book on contemporary sculpture. I wrote a vigorous protest to his publishers. They didn't seem to mind very much. It appears if I protest energetically and loudly enough it will help to sell the book. I shan't. It is extraordinary how people here believe and are guided in matters of art by the printed word. Take this same X for instance. The fellow has written several large and fully illustrated works on European sculpture. They are incredibly bad, totally lacking in judgment and knowledge. His method is probably like this. He goes to an hotel in each European capital, asks the Hall Porter who the leading sculptors are, and then buys picture postcards. I sometimes wonder whether he gets further than the porter at the station. Yet if the book is long enough people will listen to him, and he will actually be called an authority on sculpture.

A. L. H. You are right in what you say about the critics, but the throwing out of hints is a very useful thing both to the artist and to the public. We are agreed that Rouault is one of the greatest forces in present-day art, probably the greatest, but nevertheless his show in London was a comparative failure, merely because there had not been sufficient hints. Now so many hints have been given about Matisse and Picasso, that a few people accept them, and their works certainly sell, though the majority have

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yet to reach the impressionists. This is not only the case in England. Clemenceau, Camille Mauclair and Théodore Duret undoubtedly helped the impressionists to arrive a few years sooner by their praise (Sisley alone died too early), just as much as Albert Wolff did by his blatant abuse. You under-value that aspect of art criticism. Even if it is intrinsically of no great value, it sends people to the galleries, and that is the great thing. Once people are there, they are on the way to understanding. One of Van Gogh's greatest patrons, who really understood his work before it became fashionable, was the proprietor of a 'bistro' who took canvases in exchange for drinks. If you wrote a book it would give many useful hints to the better understanding of sculpture in general. It might cure 'Rimaphobia.'

EPSTEIN. You are optimistic. But the fact remains that I am a sculptor, and not a writer. I rarely even write letters now, and the idea of giving up any of my time in writing a book horrifies me. My work is there, that is enough.

A. L. H. Then at any rate let me make a record of these conversations. In time they will amount to a book, and you will have been saved the trouble.

EPSTEIN. Yes, all right. I can see no reason to object to that, only you must be accurate and you must be fair and not treat me to a fire of questions,

ON ART CRITICISM

like the district attorney. I don't particularly care about pontificating always, and exchanging ideas with friends is much more amusing. Newspaper people are constantly asking me such riddles as, what is my definition of beauty? One man from an inferior paper made up a long imaginary interview with me, when actually I had turned him out of the house, in which he said to me with great courage, "Epstein, I don't like your Madonna at all." It is rather unnecessary, it takes time, and I am tired after my day's work.

(Our conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Peggy Jean, and Epstein became entirely a father.)

CHAPTER TWO

MAINLY AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

SCULPTURE AND PAINTING—EARLY DAYS—PARIS—
THE STRAND STATUES—THE OSCAR WILDE MEMORIAL
—AMERICA AGAIN

A. L. H. How do you account for the fact that in the whole history of art there are so few sculptors of account to compare to the vast company of painters? It would be difficult to name ten of the front rank. There are whole periods rich in painting that have produced no sculptors at all.

EPSTEIN. The reason that there have been and are so many more painters than sculptors is largely an economic one. A painter may take a few days or weeks over a painting, and can do many drawings in one day. I myself have done as many as twenty, while with the sculptor it is a question of months or years with a very heavy outlay in materials, and far less chance of ultimate sales. A well-known English painter once told me he wished to do some sculpture, but after working many days on a block of stone without making much impression he aban-



ELLEN JANSEN
(1930)

THE ECONOMICS OF SCULPTURE

doned it. At the present day this economic question has become aggravated. People have not the space, or will not try to find it, to place a piece of sculpture, while there is always room for just another picture. It is for this reason that so many dealers have suggested to me to do small 'bric-à-brac' nudes, but I am not interested.

Apart from economic considerations there are many other factors that make sculpture more difficult. Intellectually it requires a far greater effort of concentration to visualise a work in the round. I find it difficult to work on more than two busts at the same period. Also in carving there is absolute finality about every movement. It is impossible to rub out and begin again. This fight with the material imposes a constant strain. A sudden flaw or weakness may upset a year's work. This is an important fact that so many journalists lose sight of, or never know, when they call *Genesis*, for instance, a "joke in marble." No artist can afford to give over a year of intense concentration to amuse a few gossip writers.

Also so little is known about sculpture. People have not formed their own standards. There are comparatively many persons with a more or less sound judgment in painting, whose opinions on sculpture are not worth having. There are a variety of reasons for this. Lack of opportunity for study

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

is perhaps the greatest. Pictures are to be seen everywhere, and mechanical reproduction has reached a sufficient stage of development to allow the poorest person some opportunity for study, while photographs of sculpture are never really satisfactory. Museum study is not for the beginner, and the quantity of the work displayed is bewildering for the person with no clear plan. The remarkable sculpture in Italian churches is too often hidden in the dim light. Even in Paris, the very centre of art, sculpture is not well understood.

A. L. H. I find that you have practically to live with sculpture really to understand it. It is thrilling to me to go into your studio at different times of day and to watch the play of light, colouring the work. I shall never forget the impressiveness of *Genesis* one evening as it was becoming dark. It seemed to hold all the light, casting everything in the shade. It was living and gigantic. I look at my most treasured possessions, *The Sick Child* and *Virginia Jay*, by every light. They change in the sun, the rain and the snow. They are still a mystery in a way that few pictures can ever be. Ruskin was right when he urged people to get up at some unearthly hour to visit a Florentine Church by one particular light. To me sculpture is human and we cannot see it always at its best. The appreciation of sculpture is an adventure, and people are not adven-



"THE LITTLE NEGRESS"
(Pencil Drawing)

EARLY DAYS IN PARIS

turously-minded artistically.

What made you originally turn to sculpture?

EPSTEIN. Ever since I can remember I was fond of drawing. That together with reading was my chief recreation. My parents were business people and this love of art must have developed quite spontaneously. I was the first artist in my family.

N As a boy I always preferred an open-air life and
O loved to play truant. It was only drawing and
N sculpture that could keep me in the house at all. I
N really started as an illustrator. My first work was
A a book dealing with Jewish types in New York.*

N The drawings were bold, but far more detailed than
my later work. I have no copy here. Later a considerable number of my drawings were bought by the *Century Magazine* for illustrating articles, chiefly on life in New York. The money I earned enabled me to get to Paris, but I went to Paris as a sculptor and not as an illustrator and painter. What turned
me from drawing to sculpture was the great desire
to see things in the round, and to study form in its
different aspects from varying angles, and also the
love of the purely physical side of sculpture. I felt
here a full outlet for my energy, both physical and
mental, that was far more satisfying to me than
drawing. This physical side of sculpture is a very

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N
N **The Spirit of the Ghetto* by Hutchins Hapgood. (Funk and Wagnalls, 1902, Revised edition 1909.)

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

important factor that is often overlooked.

When I arrived in Paris I enrolled myself as a student at the École des Beaux-Arts. I was a complete novice at sculpture, but I managed to satisfy the examiners. The test was a two-hour study of a model.

The academy was the same as all academies. You know the depressing pseudo-Greek work that wins medals and distinctions and sends its creators to Rome. You can see it in our own Royal Academy—the same year after year, and it has not altered since then. Only in France the Academy was just then beginning to be discredited. But even when I was a student Rodin was taken as rather a joke by the Academicians, and not recognised as having any merit at all. It is in that way that Academies have their uses. A visit to one of their exhibitions is enough to disgust any serious young artist with ‘art pompier’ for the rest of his life.

The time that I was in Paris was a most interesting one artistically. The rebels were just beginning to gain recognition at the expense of the Academicians, but the victory, which was soon to be absolute, was by no means complete yet. I well remember the veteran Bougureau, who was symbolical of Academic art to such an extent that Cézanne, in his lamentations, referred to ‘le salon de Bougureau,’ being helped by two admiring pupils, almost over-

EARLY DAYS IN PARIS

come with the honour, into a chair when he came to Julian's to criticise the drawings. The time that I was in Paris saw the first and the finest Salon d'Automne, and introduced Gauguin and Van Gogh to a wider circle. Their pictures exhibited in that salon are now nearly all in museums and important private collections. At the time much of the press was hostile, but these first-post impressionists had their staunch supporters in the young poets and novelists, who in France are in the closest sympathy and understanding with plastic art, and in a few dealers, who rose to prosperity with their growing fame. Paul Guillaume had just commenced his collection of African sculpture, which was not yet popular, and had only been discovered by a few artists and writers. In those days 75 francs would be a heavy price to pay for a piece that may be worth many thousands of francs at the present day. Picasso was beginning his first experiments in cubism, the early hesitant phases where representation was not yet discarded, but only seen through cubist spectacles.

Marinetti and his futurist manifesto had yet to come, and though the movement died within a few years, the word 'futurist,' which had a definite meaning then, the depicting of movement in painting, still persists as a term of general abuse that includes all non-academic movements both before

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

and after Marinetti's time. I remember once going to an exhibition in England with him. His standards of criticism were curious. He would pass several pictures by with a shrug of dismissal, "*Ça ce n'est pas du tout futuriste,*" and occasionally pause more approvingly, "*Ça c'est un peu futuriste.*" For a long time he sent me his violently-worded manifestoes in which he damned all romantic conceptions, beautiful women and Venice by moonlight.

It was in the Louvre and later in the British Museum that I found my real inspiration, though I modelled and carved at the *École des Beaux-Arts*. I stayed in Paris for two years before going to London, where I have lived and worked ever since.

My first big commission, procured through the recommendation of Muirhead Bone, was the sculpture for the British Medical Association building in the Strand. Like all the work that was to follow, this led to considerable difficulties. I had fourteen months in which to do eighteen colossal figures. As I look back on it, most of the work still pleases me, but I am not satisfied with the scheme as a whole. Newspaper attacks started as soon as four of the figures were partially uncovered, and then I heard for the first time that my work was dangerous and immoral. Strangely enough at the present day critics who attack my work in very much the same

THE STRAND STATUES

manner refer to these figures as showing what I really can do, and Sir Reginald Blomfield, an attacker of "Day and Night," actually referred to 'those Halcyon days,' though he was strangely silent then.

I also came into contact with the policeman as an art critic and guardian of morals for the first time. A policeman followed me on to the scaffolding, looked at the work and made a hurried note in his book. He then went up to the other works, making notes all the time. It was only afterwards that I found out that the police are regularly used as art and literary critics.

The figures represent:

1. (At East End of Strand front.) "Primal energy"—man blowing the breath of life into an atom.

2. "Form emerging from chaos"—a man holding a mass of rock in the midst of which is vaguely shown the form of a child.

3. "Hygeia"—the Goddess of Health, with cup and a serpent.

4. "Chemical Research"—a man holding a retort.

5. "Academic Research"—a figure examining a scroll.

6. "The Brain"—a figure with a winged skull.

7. "Infancy"—an old woman holding an infant.

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

8. "Youth"—the figure of a young man with arms raised.

9. "Manliness"—a virile figure.

10. "Maternity"—a mother and child.

The other eight figures represent youth and maidenhood.

A. L. H. You certainly accomplished one miracle in these works, for the Reverend Dr. Clifford, Father Bernard Vaughan and the Secretary of the Protestant Alliance were in thorough agreement for once as to their dangers for the young.

I have found some interesting comments on this by Frank Harris in *Vanity Fair* of 1.7.08:

"Among the worst of these loud-voiced prudes is Father Bernard Vaughan. He 'cannot conceive,' if you please, 'how these statues could do anything but harm.' The worst statue, it appears, is a statue representing *Maternity*, and on this subject Father Vaughan speaks with solemn severity:

" 'The sacred subject of maternity,' he tells us, 'has been treated a thousand times with idealistic beauty; but the Strand mother suggests merely brutal commonplace.' " (Almost word for word what has been said of *Genesis* twenty-three years later, so that the reply is extremely topical.)

"Now one small lesson to Father Vaughan. He is, we understand, a Roman Catholic, and ought

THE OSCAR WILDE MEMORIAL

therefore to know St. Peter's at Rome. The subject of maternity is treated on the Baldachino in St. Peter's with disgraceful realism. There are half a dozen different statues in high relief showing progressive advances in maternity, and then the Virgin Mary at the end with a normal figure and the Bambino in her arms. Will Father Vaughan please take the beam out of his own eye before he finds the mote in the eye of others."

* * * *

EPSTEIN. My next important commission, and also incidentally my next contact with the police—the French this time—was the monument to Oscar Wilde, which had been entrusted to me by his executors. As you can imagine this was an exceedingly difficult task from the point of view of pleasing people (not that I ever try to please anyone but myself), for Wilde's enthusiastic admirers would have liked a Greek youth standing by a broken column, or some scene from his works such as the Young King, which was suggested many times, while to his detractors he was wholly repellent, deserving of no monument. Once again the stage was set for a discussion that was centred almost entirely on something altogether outside the sphere of sculpture. In addition to these things, cemetery

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sculpture rarely departs from certain very fixed forms, and in Latin countries in particular there is, far more than in England, a "cult of the dead," so that anything original was certain to give offence of some kind.

I began my work in England on a 20-ton block of Hopton Wood stone. I conceived a vast winged figure, a messenger swiftly moving with vertical wings, giving the feeling of forward flight. It was of course purely symbolical, the conception of a poet as a messenger, but many people tried to read into it a portrait of Oscar Wilde. While I was finishing it in the cemetery, the police for some reason or other took offence and the monument was covered up. This made work exceedingly difficult, a question of bribes and hurried spasms of work. I have not seen it since.

A. L. H. I have just been over to see the monument. It is deeply impressive. What interested me particularly was its movement. It is the only work of yours in motion. It is surging forward, yet it is not restless. What interested me also was the technical treatment of the wings. They are composed of a mass of stone considerably heavier than the body, yet instead of over-weighting it, they lift it up and actually seem to support it.



PROFESSOR JOHN DEWEY
(1927)

CHAPTER THREE

RIMA

A DISCUSSION ON BEAUTY—RIMA—A RÉSUMÉ OF THE CRITICISM OF RIMA

(1)

A. L. H. How is it that so many things that are beautiful in art are the reverse in nature? Rembrandt's "Carcase" is the classic example. Rodin in his *L'Art* says:

"Ce qu'on nomme communément *laideur* dans la Nature peut dans l'art devenir d'une grande beauté. . . . Mais qu'un grand artiste s'empare de l'une ou de l'autre de ces *laideurs*, instantanément il la transfigure—d'un coup de baguette magique il en fait de la beauté; c'est de l'alchimie, de la féerie."*

EPSTEIN. I do not agree with the theory that the magic wand changes something ugly in nature; transmutation by a painter or a sculptor into something

* "What is commonly called ugliness in nature can in art become exceedingly beautiful. . . . But when a great artist gets hold of one or another of these ugly things, instantly he transforms them, with a touch of his wand he makes them beautiful; it is alchemy, magic."

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

beautiful. The thing itself is always beautiful, or will appear beautiful to the person who knows how to look at it, a fact that Rodin fully recognises, for there is no absolute standard of beauty. To Rembrandt that carcase was impressive. He saw the power and grandeur of it. A painter will see colour and composition in everything, just as I see sculpture everywhere. People may bore me when they talk, but everyone interests me as a possible problem in sculpture. The difference of our feelings towards an object, as we look on it in life or in art, is caused by accidents, circumstances entirely outside the object itself. Rembrandt did not make beauty out of something that was originally ugly. Velasquez' Dwarf both in life and in the picture had real beauty, a truly remarkable expression of sorrow and dignity. In life the ordinary person might have felt a pity or a purely physical repulsion that would exclude all else, but Velasquez did not make an ugly object into a beautiful one. The beauty was always there. It is only the accidental circumstances of life that conceal the beauty from some people at some times, and from some people always. An artist naturally sees beauty in life and renders it.

In May Goldie, who might be called by many people an ugly woman, I saw great beauty; particularly her thin neck supporting the large curly head, like some flower, and the pathos of her expression.

BEAUTY

Her hooked nose pleased me for its character. I did not make something that was not there. I saw it and translated it into sculpture. (See illustration, opposite.)

A. L. H. I have certainly seen more beautiful women, since I have been coming here, than ever before in my life.

EPSTEIN. Many people will admit that they are beautiful, but I am supposed to make them ugly. The converse of the theory just quoted.

A. L. H. Ugliness and beauty seem very near at times. Only the pretty is fatal.

EPSTEIN. Even the pretty is safe with a great artist. There is such a thing as great prettiness, distinct from great beauty. Both Boucher and Renoir could attempt to render the pretty and produce masterpieces. The danger is the man who aims consciously at beauty, destroying all character. Modigliani had a good phrase for a sculptor of that type: 'faiseur de beauté' (beauty manufacturer). I have undertaken the pretty in my child studies, small heads of Peggy Jean, the Joan Greenwood. The only time that I have ever been put out of humour by a criticism was when a particularly objectionable writer said "a child's soul is not safe in his hands." These works are in the European tradition, meaning the school of Donatello. There is that same shy smile that children have, that is seen

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in the works of such a sculptor as Mino da Fiesole.

The artist's province is everywhere and everything. It is part of the artist's function to interpret our common human experiences. It cannot be confined to a section of society, nor to what is pretty alone. Life is made up of much more than pretty faces, and an artist of any depth cannot only be concerned with pretty things. It is a pretty and singularly stupid idea of the function of the artist to imagine he should only represent pretty faces, pretty landscapes or pretty ideas. If poetry were made up of pretty conceits it would rule out nearly all the great poetry of the world—most of Shakespeare, in fact. Iago is not a pretty character.

Much of the Rima criticism was fundamentally dishonest. You will notice that not one solid argument was raised against it, only jokes about cruelty to birds.

I was only walking across Hyde Park the other day and went to see Rima. I tried to view it as impersonally as possible. The wind was blowing and the leaves falling. It seemed just right. I really cannot understand what all the fuss was about. While I was doing the work in Epping Forest, my wife said: "They will never be able to make a fuss this time." (Smiling) I shall never forget Mr. Baldwin's expression, though, when he pulled the string, and the work was unveiled.

RIMA

A. L. H. Surely people expected a piece of book illustration and were bitterly disappointed at not finding the obvious. Hence the accusation that you had not even read the book.

EPSTEIN. Probably the whole agitation was due to the usual total misconception of what the artist's function is, and also absolute ignorance of what can and what cannot be done in sculpture. Much of the discussion was ridiculous from the start, as my critics wished me to do something quite impossible with the medium, and with regard to the conditions under which the work was to be seen when finished. They heard the words "Bird Goddess," which suggested to them something filmy, in very light relief. Even had I conceived it in that fashion, it would have been impossible from a purely practical point of view, that did not occur to them. The work had to be visible from a path thirty yards away, and I was bound to make use of that site and of a panel of that particular size by a committee that had decided the matter beforehand.

Of course I had read the book. The particular passage that appealed to me was the description of how Rima met her death:

"What a distance to fall, through burning leaves and smoke, like a white bird shot dead with a poisoned arrow, swift and straight into that sea of flame below."

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Although I read it and was moved by what I read, it is obviously impossible to give an illustration of the book in sculpture that would be generally pleasing to all its readers and at the same time good as sculpture. A similar problem arose years before in my Oscar Wilde monument. Even had it been possible to know how Hudson thought of Rima, I could only create her sincerely as I myself conceived her in my particular medium in the particular space put at my disposal. You mustn't make the mistake of thinking that I despise illustration. I don't at all. Most of the great artists have been illustrators. But the illustration must be of secondary interest. A work must fail or succeed in the first place by its plastic qualities. You have to conceive the idea poetically of course, only the medium is plastic. You have to think of the balance of the parts, essential rhythms, subsidiary rhythms, light and shade—all purely sculptural considerations. I cannot remark too often that the artist is a very practical person fully as much as he is a dreamer. The two must go together.

There is a great difference between illustration as a creative art and illustration as a purely interpretative art. Nowadays the worst insult that can be hurled at a picture is "Oh, that's mere illustration." That remark is far too much of a generalisation, that includes nearly all artists from Michael Angelo to



MAY
(1930)

RIMA

the illustrator of captions in *Punch*. The primitives illustrated the life of Christ and of the Saints, Rembrandt illustrated in "The Anatomical School," "The Night Watch," "Susanna and the Elders," to name only three of his paintings. Illustration is harmful only when it is the one thing that can be said about a picture or a piece of sculpture, but if the other elements are present, illustration, the link which gives a work some human interest, is on the contrary an advantage.

(II)

It is interesting in connection with the conversations recorded in this chapter to give a brief summary of the Rima controversy. It will serve as a useful commentary on the artist's own remarks. As in all the Epstein controversies that followed, the majority of competent and intelligent opinion was in favour of the artist. Those against the work resorted either to vague generalisations or to cheap puns and loud abuse that was a direct incitement to the acts of vandalism carried out by drunken law students. A quotation from the *Nation* of November 21st, 1925, supports this view:

"*Invitation*: Mr. Epstein's work in Kensington Gardens is so far from being the object of admira-

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tion that were not the English a tolerant people, it would long ago have been broken in pieces.—*Morning Post*, October 7th, 1925.

Response: The *inevitable* has happened to Mr. Epstein's *Rima*. She has been ingloriously daubed with green paint.—*Morning Post*, November 14th.

Satisfaction: It is clear that there is some quality in the memorial in Hyde Park which revolts the public. . . . The sentiment has already found expression in the youthful, foolish and *rather** hooligan dose of green paint.—*Morning Post*, November 18th."

It was only natural that the letters of protest and the agitation for the removal of *Rima* should appear in the same paper without, however, a word of condemnation at the outrage.

One such letter was signed by the Hon. John Collier, Sir Frank Dicksee, P.R.A. (in his private capacity), Sir Bernard Partridge, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir E. Ray Lankester, Sir David Murray, R.A., and others.

Mr. Epstein's retort to this letter was:

"Actually the collection of names does not carry any weight whatever, and it is in no way representative of the voice of the people. On the other hand, the protest that is going to be made against the so-called petition is really representative."

* Italics in the *Nation*.



RIMA
The Hudson Memorial, Hyde Park
Direct carving in Portland Stone, 1925)

RIMA: A RÉSUMÉ OF OPINION

This protest inspired by Mr. Cunninghame Graham and Mr. Muirhead Bone in reality ended the question as far as intelligent argument and not mere abuse was concerned.

To the Editor of *The Times*, November 23rd, 1925:

SIR,—Opinions will always differ about the artistic merits of works of art, and they are likeliest to differ about a work so modern and unconventional in style as Mr. Epstein's Hudson Bird Sanctuary panel in Hyde Park.

Due consent for the whole design (shown in a large model of the panel by the sculptor) was obtained from the First Commissioner of Works, assisted by the advice of his Art Advisory Committee, and the memorial was then erected by subscriptions from all parts of the United Kingdom, the Empire, and America.

I have the agreement of the following signatories against any proposal to remove so completely authorised a work on the demand of a mere section of the public. So unprecedented an action as now seems to be proposed would, if carried out, inevitably open an era of hasty decision and reprisal in the region of our public memorials which most of us would deplore, and which all committees re-

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

sponsible for them and all sculptors would find intolerable.

Yours, etc.,

MUIRHEAD BONE.

Burlington Fine Arts Club, November 21st.

The following are the signatories referred to:

Charles Aitken, Walter Bayes, A.R.W.S., George Belcher, Arnold Bennett, Laurence Binyon, Detmar Blow, Sir D. Y. Cameron, R.A., Lord Carmichael, the Hon. Evan Charteris, George Clausen, R.A., Charles B. Cochran, Sir Sidney Colvin, Sir Martin Conway, M.P., S. L. Courtauld, Samuel Courtauld, A. M. Daniel, W. G. De Gleyn, A.R.A., Frank Dobson, G. Eumoropoulos, Martin Hardie, the Right Hon. F. Leverton Harris, G. F. Hill, Professor A. M. Hind, Harold Hodge, Lord Howard de Walden, Gerald Kelly, A.R.A., Eric Kennington.

Sir John Lavery, R.A., the Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., Sir Bertram Mackennal, R.A., Ambrose McEvoy, A.R.A., Eric R. D. Maclagan, Edward Marsh, Glyn Philpot, R.A., Henry Poole, A.R.A., Professor C. H. Reilly, Morley Roberts, F. Cayley Robinson, A.R.A., Professor W. Rothenstein, Walter W. Russell, A.R.A., Sir Michael Sadler, Lord Sandwich, C. P. Scott, G. Bernard Shaw, Charles Sims, R.A., J. C. Squire, Sybil Thorndike, Ernest Thurtle, M.P.,

RIMA: A RÉSUMÉ OF OPINION

Hugh Walpole, and Sir Robert Witt.

Later the signatories were augmented by:

Lord Henry Bentinck, M.P., R. B. Cunninghame Graham, Francis Dodd, A.R.W.S., Henry M. Fletcher, F.R.I.B.A., Edward Garnett, H. S. Goodhart-Rendel, F.R.I.B.A., Sir E. Marshall-Hall, K.C., C. Lewis Hind, Francis Howard, Professor Selwyn Image, Holbrook Jackson, Augustus E. John, A.R.A., Edmond X. Kapp, Ralph Knott, F.R.I.B.A., P. G. Konody, George Moore, Sir Alfred Mond, M.P., Henry W. Nevinson, C. R. W. Nevinson, Sir William Orpen, R.A., Frank Pick, Nigel Playfair, Bertram Priestman, R.A., Halsey Ricardo, Professor A. E. Richardson, V. Rienaecker, Howard Robertson, Henry Rushbury, A.R.W.S., Algernon Talmage, A.R.A., Ben Tillett, Leon Underwood, C. F. A. Voysey, E. Wadsworth, Professor Hubert Worthington, and Dr. Hagberg Wright.

C. R. Ashbee, J. H. Badley, Arnesby Brown, R.A., Sir John J. Burnet, R.A., James L. Caw, Ernest A. Cole, Campbell Dodgson, the Master of Downing College, Cambridge, St. John Ervine, S. Melton Fisher, R.A., Colin Gill, Maurice Greiffenhagen, R.A., Allan Gwynne-Jones, Ambrose Heal, Commander Kenworthy, M.P., Rupert Lee, Sir William Llewellyn, R.A., H. Macbeth-Raeburn, A.R.A.,¹² Rt. Hon. Reginald McKenna, Mrs.

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Reginald McKenna, James MacLehose, Miss Violet Markham, Rt. Hon. C. F. G. Masterman, William Nicholson, Malcolm Osborne, A.R.A., Frank Rinder, Randolph Schwabe, Sir H. Llewellyn Smith, Edmund J. Sullivan, A.R.W.S., Alfred Sutro, Charles Vyse, Hubert Wellington, and Terrick Williams, A.R.A.

We have also received letters to protest against the proposed removal of the Panel from 170 students of the Royal College of Art and 85 students of the Slade School.

* * * *

The matter became frankly humorous when questions were asked in Parliament, and Sir William Davidson, himself to be the victim of much narrow-mindedness and stupidity many years later, asked the Under Secretary for Home Affairs what was the use of having a Fine Arts Commission if *Rima* were allowed to remain. Surely the first time Parliament has shown any interest in the Fine Arts?

CHAPTER FOUR

THE STATUE OF CHRIST

A. L. H. Your Christ has exposed you to the bitterest and most illogical attacks. You have been accused of blasphemy, apparently again on grounds of naturalism, of unnecessary distortion, and on account of your particular conception, both ethnographic and psychological.

EPSTEIN. People said that my Christ was an oriental. That is quite absurd. I had no distinct ethnographical type in mind. The work was not taken from a model at all, though I used a model for certain aspects of the work. People would I suppose be profoundly shocked at the idea of a model for Christ though the old masters used one, especially at the periods most popular with the masses.

The psychology of my Christ would certainly not be popular. He is accusing. He points in reproach to his wounded hands. I have accentuated them in a perfectly logical manner that is necessary here in order to convey my particular idea. Perhaps the racial element also was responsible for some of the

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

attacks. The idea of a Jew and Christ seems, illogically enough, totally unrelated to many people. Later, in July 1929, Archbishop Downey must have had my statue of Christ in mind when, discussing the proposed Roman Catholic Cathedral in Liverpool, he said:

“It would be calamitous if in an attempt to express the twentieth-century spirit you merely achieved something Epsteinish.”

My reply was:

SIR,—I note that Archbishop Downey (who has inspired the scheme for a Roman Catholic Cathedral at Liverpool designed to express the spirit of the age) says that it would be “calamitous” if in his search for a modern interpretation of Christianity nothing was achieved but something “Epsteinish.”

Why would an “Epsteinish” conception of Christianity be at variance with our late exhibition of Christianity in the Great War, when all Christian and heathen nations warred with each other? Perhaps Epstein can express modern Christianity as well as and better than any sculptor.

Archbishop Downey does not wish to have any more imitations of Gothic or Byzantine sculpture. He can only then turn to Epstein. Who else is there? The Roman Catholic Church (the All-Embracing Church) employed Michael Angelo,



DAME SYBIL THORNDIKE
(1925)

THE STATUE OF CHRIST

Raphael, and other great artists of their day. Whom can they turn to to-day but the Jew Epstein?

(Signed) JACOB EPSTEIN.

18, Hyde Park Gate, S.W.7. Wed., July 31, 1929.

A. L. H. That is all easily understandable, but the root of the whole attack surely lies in the breakdown of genuine religious emotion, both in the artist and his public. Rouault's Head of Christ and your statue seem to me to be the only truly reverent and deeply religious works I know of in recent times, because they create something that the artist really felt.

EPSTEIN. The primitive artist drew and carved Christ with genuine emotion, and certainly the public of those days received his work in the same spirit. The primitive artist did not try to make a realistic man, but a symbol, according to the manner in which he viewed him. The Christ of Fra Angelico in San Marco in Florence is the joyous Christ of the resurrection. Later, when artists were less religiously moved, they ceased to paint Christ as they felt him. Instead they depicted an artist's model, dressed up as the conventional Christ. Many artists after Michael Angelo saw here an admirable opportunity for developing certain purely technical sides of their art, chiaroscuro, the

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

study of anatomy or muscles in general. The religious attitude had entirely departed. When people sneer at illustration they forget that the greatest religious works of early times were almost pure illustration, an attempt on the part of the artist to show the people what manner of man he thought and felt Christ to be. What the public now expects, whenever Christ is depicted, is not an artist's sincere conception of Christ, but a purely third-hand rendering, a realistic study in fact of a model who must look as like a late Renaissance model as possible, and that image has become so very firmly set that there is a very definite formula now for all artists who would depict Christ without giving any offence. That is why my conception of an accusing Christ has upset so many people. To invoke history, and to tell me that he must have been bearded is absurd. The best known and accepted images of Christ wear Florentine costume and live in Tuscan gardens. To attack an artist's Christ in the name of realism is not only the height of folly, but is irreverent as well. To the deeply and truly religious Christ is not as other men, but when an artist seeks to place him apart and to give his view of the difference they call it blasphemy.

It was said that I had not originally intended the figure for Christ and only called it so afterwards, but that is too obviously ridiculous. I am and always

THE STATUE OF CHRIST

have been deeply interested in the personality of Christ, and I see that personality as a highly complex one. The traditional Christ in art harps on one element alone to the exclusion of all others. Sweetness and meekness are certainly present in that personality, but it is far more complex. The gospels clearly show that there was intellect power and a sense of justice as well. These sterner elements have been entirely forgotten. The conventional Christ in art is not the leader who could have inspired the Apostles to leave all to follow Him. He could never have thrown the money-changers out of the Temple. I have tried to indicate in my statue of Christ what I found in the gospels.

I naturally expected it to be criticised; a unanimously favourable opinion would have been little compliment to such a work. There are many criticisms that could have been made, some of them unanswerable, and there are many I could have advanced myself. But the whole line of criticism adopted was illogical and showed little real understanding of the personality of Christ or of art.

When it was first exhibited the late Father Bernard Vaughan attacked it bitterly. I will use his quotation, because although it is far more violent than any of the others and goes far beyond

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

legitimate criticism, it is typical of the line adopted by many.

"I felt ready to cry out with indignation that in this Christian England there should be exhibited the figure of a Christ which suggested to me some degraded Chaldean or African, which wore the appearance of an Asiatic-American or Hun, which reminded me of some emaciated Hindu or badly grown Egyptian."

After this muddled and meaningless diatribe he went on to the real point of his criticism, that all artists from Cimabue to Holman Hunt had had the same idea of Christ. This is, of course, a very obvious error. Fra Angelico, Piero Della Francesca, Michael Angelo, the Flemish all had totally different conceptions. The generally accepted Christ that appealed to the late Father Vaughan was a late Renaissance product. Clutton Brock found the right answer when he said, "Father Vaughan will not be able to understand why his Carlo Dolci Christ seems blasphemy to others."

I was caricatured as depicting Napoleon with a moustache, but the parallel cannot hold good. We have portraits of Napoleon that are the works of contemporaries and leave us in no manner of doubt about him. The conventional countenance of Christ is purely traditional and legendary. There is no scintilla of evidence that can be based on

THE STATUE OF CHRIST

contemporary work. It is all as purely imaginative as my own.

My work is not a portrait, therefore, and must not be criticised as such. It embodies my own conception of Christ.

CHAPTER FIVE

NIGHT AND DAY—A RÉSUMÉ OF THE CRITICISM OF NIGHT AND DAY

(1)

EPSTEIN. The attacks on my later work were all due to the same prejudice and misconception as in the case of Rima, and are in fact repetitions. You can take as typical the case of a writer who thoroughly misunderstood this whole question of illustration and creative art when he made a really bitter attack on my statue of Christ. Apart from his obvious ignorance of sculpture what right had he to say that my conception was in any way inferior to his? In fact I doubt very much if he has anything but a second-hand conception, borrowed very probably from Guido Reni or Holman Hunt. Yet we both believe in illustration. I, in illustrating Christ as I feel him, my critic in an illustration of Christ that is purely traditional. He is at the other end, the extreme right, of those who pooh-pooh illustration entirely, and talk of pure form and the abstract. Incidentally, I have never said publicly that I

ABSTRACT ART

consider that particular author's works unreadable.

A. L. H. The fact that you take up a position halfway between the two extremes accounts for the fact that you are attacked by the "academy crowd," and not defended very vigorously by Bloomsbury, who are obviously frightened of you, because you fit in so badly with their neat and carefully labelled theories. Actually this makes you the sanest of all the progressive artists of to-day. What a joke on the public—Epstein as an entirely logical person, avoiding all extremes. Yet you were one of the first to experiment with the abstract.

EPSTEIN. I never saw the abstract as an end in itself, and I do not agree with the people who would divorce art entirely from human interest. They argue amongst other things that the possibilities of pure form are endless. That is not the case. They are limited like the patterns in a children's kaleidoscope. I have seen quantities of pictures by abstract painters such as Léger, but I find them very dull and devoid of interest. Abstract work is extremely useful for experiment. Pure cubism is uninteresting and unprofitable in itself, but as laboratory work it has possibilities.

A. L. H. The value of the human element was to me powerfully shown at the Persian Exhibition: I found the carpets dull, when the first surprise

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

at their beauty had worn off. I could only understand them as part of a whole scheme of decoration, taken together with furniture and architecture. The Persian carpet is probably the most beautiful specimen of decorative art, yet the absence of the human element leaves one unsatisfied.

Where would you place *The Rock Drill*?

EPSTEIN. *The Rock Drill* is not entirely abstract. It is a conception of a thing I knew well in New York and is my feeling of that thing as a living entity, translated into terms of sculpture. It is a thing prophetic of much in the great war and as such within the experience of nearly all, and it has therefore very definite human associations. There is a long way between the entirely abstract and the absolutely naturalistic.

A. L. H. I can accept on paper many of the arguments that the abstract artist advances, but in life his work bores me. Also, he so often seems to lack the courage of his convictions, and gives what is obviously purely an abstract arrangement a name with a very definite association. By rights all his work should be called merely "A Study in Form—Opus X." This whole question of the vast range of work that lies between abstract and concrete arises in the controversy that raged round your *Night and Day*. Though by what process of thought people can conceive of the possibilities of a

NIGHT AND DAY

realistic rendering of *Night* and *Day* in sculpture, I cannot imagine.

EPSTEIN. Everyone has formed some conception or other of *Night* and *Day*. The majority of people probably see *Night* as a pretty lady with a sad face all dressed in flowing black drapery. They may believe in that so firmly that it becomes to them a naturalistic conception. Their imagination goes no further than the catalogues of theatrical costumiers. In fact one of my critics writing of it actually used the words "*Supposed* to represent Night and Day," and went on to say that this raised the question as to the extent to which sculpture should be realistic or conventional. I have of course fully as much right to my own conception, and what is highly important is that this conception must be and is in fact realisable in sculpture that is to form part of the architecture of a building. The casual critic may have his own ideas and congratulate himself on the vastness of his imagination, but the sculptor's imagination must be bounded by what is practicable. I used no model and I had in mind no particular race though people have called the figure Mongolian. It apparently always strikes people as unpleasant and peculiar to portray a being so alien to the appearance of the Briton. Perhaps there is in the figure of *Night* a touch of the inhuman, but there must be. The subject calls for it. Such a

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subject must inspire awe. My groups in this case are not meant to be seen apart from the whole mass of the building. The criticism really started when, without my authorisation, they were photographed separately, divorced from their context, and at an angle that was not intended. They were not made to be seen at eye level, but at the exact height at which they were placed. Work of this kind is in many ways less personal. The sculptor is bound by the form of the whole building. To have taken any group, however perfect in itself, and to have stuck it against a building would have given the whole thing a very restless effect. Milan cathedral is a case in point. There the figures are stuck to the surface with the result that except at night this most popular building is extremely disturbing. In Egypt can be found the perfect example of the alliance between sculpture and architecture.

However much people may dislike *Day* and *Night*, no one can deny that they form very definitely part of the mass of the building. I would have done something entirely different had I intended them for exhibition in a gallery or museum. Another criticism, from the opposite camp this time, was that I had disobeyed one of the fundamental laws of carving in detaching the arm of *Night*. This is not the case as the arm is well supported by the stone. In any case those so-called laws of sculpture are

NIGHT AND DAY

continually broken by the Greeks. There are numerous examples: The Victory of Samothrace with her outstretched wings.

Some critics fully realised the architectural qualities of the work, but they go to another extreme and do not see the carving. They talk glibly of the fine effect that weathering will have on the soft stone. There is always that tendency to ignore what an artist has done and to talk of the improving effects of time. (Note: extract from a letter from a critic, *Manchester Guardian*, August 3rd, 1929. "Whatever may be thought of the merits of this elemental sculpture, the decorative needs of the building have been met, and the architects are content to leave the rest to their last great allies—weather and time.")

This is merely a particular form of artistic snobbery. However much the groups are part of the building, they have their own separate existence as carvings.

I would be the last to deny the beauty of patina. In my letter of protest at the Greek sculpture restorations, I mention "the mellow golden patina of centuries."* The removal of such patina was destructive and actually carried away an integral part of the work in the scraping involved, but this does not mean that I would not rather see a work of sculpture straight from the master's hand,

* See page 145.

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were such a thing possible.

The point of view of some of my defenders was amusing. The General Manager of the railway company, who commissioned the work, seemed very cautious about it while it was in progress, and constantly reassured himself by saying, "Wait till it is finished." His final pronouncement was: "It is easy to decry Epstein's work. It could be called crude, rough and uncouth, but that does not detract from its merit."

(II)

I have carefully sifted here a vast mass of newspaper clippings, actually three trunks full, referring to *Night* and *Day*. Artistically they are of no value whatsoever, but they make interesting reading in connection with the last chapter, and possess distinct sociological value in much the same way as H. L. Mencken's collected "Americana." Indeed, they form the basis of a remarkable "Anglicana," and they have their importance when taken together with the conversations recorded here. They show something of the difficulties under which a creative artist has constantly to work. To-day, everyone is amused in a superior manner by similar cuttings about the Impressionists or Rodin, to take only two



DAY

Over the door of the Head Office of the Underground Railway, St. James'
(Direct carving in Portland Stone, 1929)

NIGHT AND DAY: A RÉSUMÉ OF OPINION

examples, yet Albert Wolff, the *Figaro's* leading critic, could say in a laboured attempt at wit, similar in manner to the tone adopted by Epstein's detractors, "To-day a man just rushed into the street and bit a passer-by; evidently he had just been to visit The Impressionist Exhibition."* This about the work that is honoured in the Louvre to-day, and which is collected by every millionaire who seeks a name as a patron of the arts.

A more striking example still is provided by *Masque de Fer*, in the same paper, the *Figaro*:

"These pictures are in colour what certain of Wagner's reveries are in music . . . like a cat walking on a keyboard or a monkey who has got hold of a box of paints."

Rodin's early work, *L'Age d'Airain*, was bitterly criticised as being so realistic that it might have been taken from a cast, while his later Balzac was attacked with equal ferocity as being too far removed from life. To-day the man in the street can answer the question who was the coxcomb, Whistler or Ruskin, when he reads of the famous libel suit, and the passage complained of:

"For Mr. Whistler's own sake, no less than for the protection of the purchaser, Sir Coutts Lindsay

* *Figaro*, April 3, 1876. The article begins:

"La rue Le Feletier a du malheur. Après l'incendie de l'Opéra voici un nouveau désastre qui s'abat sur le quartier."

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ought not to have admitted works into the gallery in which the ill-educated conceit of the artist so nearly approached the aspect of wilful imposture. I have seen and heard much of Cockney impudence before now; but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face."

They make sad or amusing reading, these cuttings. It all depends how one views the matter. I find them amusing on the whole. It is really impossible to be indignant, and there is not the slightest trace of bitterness or indignation in Epstein's attitude. He will talk of them with the same detached amusement with which he tells the story of the man whose taste stopped with 1665. Incidentally this whole chapter forms a tribute to the greatness of his work, the same tribute that was paid to Courbet, Delacroix, Rodin and The Impressionists. Only the historian can now find the names of those artists who were praised at their expense.*

Mr. Frank Swinnerton has summed up the matter admirably in a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* during the *Night* controversy.

SIR,—It is difficult to judge Mr. Epstein's sculptured figures from photographs, but even in the

* Boulanger, Baudry, Delaunay, Cot, Roll, Collin, Cormon, Dagnan-Bouveret, etc.

NIGHT AND DAY: A RÉSUMÉ OF OPINION

photographs they are extremely interesting. Taking the photographs in conjunction with *the names and expressed views of those who condemn Mr. Epstein's work*, I should suppose the figures to be masterpieces.

It was, in fact, a case of a postman, a policeman (quoted by the *Evening Standard*), Sir Reginald Blomfield, Sir Reginald Frampton (the sculptor of Nurse Cavell), and the late Sir Frank Dicksee on the one side against H. G. Wells, Bernard Shaw, Frank Swinnerton, Hugh Walpole, Edmund Gosse, Cunninghame Graham, Edgar Wallace, Orpen, John, McEvoy, James Bone, Wilenski, Rutter, Aitkin, Marriot and many others on the other. I quote a letter from Epstein to the *Daily Telegraph* in this connection. It will help us to place these controversies in their proper perspective:

To the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*.

SIR,—In your Art Critic's* review of the Year's Art in the *Daily Telegraph* of Jan. 8 the statement is made concerning my sculptured groups, *Night and Day*, on the new Underground building, that "it is to be remembered that not only the uninstructed public, but the most experienced art critics, whether belonging to the orthodox or modernist schools,

* Mr. R. R. Tatlock.

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were agreed that the sculptures are thoroughly bad as works of art."

There is no truth whatever in this assertion, as witness the following from "orthodox and modernist" critics at the time of the unveiling of the groups:

Mr. Charles Aitken, director of the Tate Gallery: "Mr. Epstein's *Night and Day* give the right accent to the reticent mass of Electric House. A great achievement."

Mr. Charles Marriot, eminent art critic: "The monumental simplicity of *Night* is evident."

Mr. H. L. Wellington, professor, Royal College of Art, South Kensington: "The fundamental mark of the born sculptor is that he can take a block of stone and by his carving give the form intenser interest, significance, and life. Surely this has been done beyond question."

Mr. Muirhead Bone: "To me they speak with the sudden impressiveness which I think is the innate quality of great sculpture. I feel my imagination kindled here, and, recognising this as an unusual reaction to the sculptured figures on a public building, I am content."

Mr. Frank Rutter, eminent critic: "Conceived and executed in a heroic spirit that is majestic rather than grim in its stately simplicity and stillness, but is also architecturally right."



NIGHT

Over the door of the Head Office of the Underground Railway, St. James'
(Direct carving in Portland Stone, 1929)

NIGHT AND DAY: A RÉSUMÉ OF OPINION

Mr. James Bone, eminent critic: "It is an elemental conception of *Night*, ponderable and remote, making strange calls to our consciousness."

Mr. R. H. Wilenski, eminent critic: "Epstein's *Morning* and *Night* are the grandest stone carvings in London. To say this is grossly to underpraise them."

Perhaps your Art Critic only reads his own opinions.—Yours, &c.,

JACOB EPSTEIN.

18, Hyde Park-gate, S.W. 7, Jan. 11.

Here is a brief and representative anthology selected from the mass of cuttings:

"Crude, that's what I call it. Downright crude. Just like a schoolboy's first attempt."

A Postman (quoted in the *Evening Standard*, May 24th, 1929, in an article headed "Epstein likes his figure of *Night*").

* * * *

"It's not my idea of beauty."

A Policeman (quoted in the *Evening Standard*, May 24th, 1929).

* * * *

"Beauty is to him anathema. I do not mean mere

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

trifling prettiness, for many would agree with him in his condemnation of it; but all that the healthy taste admires. It is a kind of asceticism; but an asceticism without any relation to morality."

Dr. Percy Gardner (Professor of Classical Archaeology, Oxford University, and author of *The Evolution of Christian Ethics*. *Evening News*, August 2nd, 1929).

* * * *

"Is there, or is there not, an absolute beauty? Because if there is not, one thing is as good as another, and this appears to be the view of some people judging by the subjects they choose and the manner in which they present them. I think a stand should be made in these things—as liberal as possible, yet a definite stand."

Sir Reginald Blomfield (Past President of the Institute of British Architects—*Manchester Guardian*, July 27th, 1929).

* * * *

"Epstein does not know the ABC of sculpture."

Sir Reginald Frampton (the sculptor of The Nurse Cavell Monument; quoted in the *Manchester Guardian*).

* * * *

"On the ground below *Night* were several glass

NIGHT AND DAY: A RÉSUMÉ OF OPINION

receptacles containing tar. Feathers were also scattered about."

(Criticism from two young men in plus fours. From a news item in the *Evening Standard*, headed "Blackening Night.")

* * * *

Obiter Dicta

"For monuments of so repulsive a character may reasonably be expected to drive the man in the street Underground, and thus swell the revenues of the undertaking."

Sir Edward A. Parry (*Manchester Guardian*, July 25th, 1929).

* * * *

"It was Lord Darling when on the Bench who declared that he always confused Epstein and Einstein—"I know they both misuse figures," he said."

Lord Darling (quoted in the *Children's Newspaper*, June 15th, 1929).

* * * *

"As a matter of fact, some Egyptian statues are finer in every way than Epstein's."

"It (*Night*) is such a thing as anybody could make with a hammer, a chisel, time and a love of ugliness."

(The *Children's Newspaper*, in line with the *Daily Telegraph* and *Morning Post*, June 15th, 1929.)

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The other side has already been admirably represented by Mr. Frank Swinnerton's letter and Epstein's own résumé of critical opinion. I will therefore only quote three opinions in defence of *Night*. Purposely I have selected those that are the most calm and reasoned, and that are not merely the result of violent partisanship; they are also written by people possessing entirely different experiences and points of view.

To the Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*.

Sir,—I have only seen photographs of the Epstein statues, and so cannot judge as to their *relative* fitness; but, from the photographs, they seem to me true examples of his art and to represent an æsthetic conception of their subjects.

If you invite an artist of Epstein's independent genius to work for you you must expect him to be true to his own individual impulse. You cannot expect him to give you *his* notion of what other people think is *their* notion.

If you ask for Epstein you will have Epstein, and, in my opinion, you are lucky to get him.—Yours, &c.,

HUGH WALPOLE.

90, Piccadilly, London, W., *July 24th*.

To the Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*.

Sir,—No doubt there is a legitimate amusement



ESTHER
(Bronze, 1930)

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like Sir Edward Parry's to be obtained from the seemingly odd conclusions in art reached by those of us whose "months" of study have lengthened now into many years; yet I trust even this will not divert your readers from trying to understand the very real merits of these sculptures. And perhaps in the first place a certain consideration is due from us when seeking to judge the mature productions of an artist who is as widely considered as Epstein is to possess genius at his chosen work.

The groups have a somewhat harsh and stark character which makes little concession to our likes and dislikes, but to me they speak with the sudden impressiveness which I think is the innate sentiment of great sculpture. I am grateful in these days of many trivialities for the intense desire they evince to find anew the old sources of grandeur in sculptural art. I feel my imagination kindled here, and, recognising this as an unusual reaction to the sculptured figures on a public building, am content.

Yours, etc.

MUIRHEAD BONE.

Burlington Fine Arts Club, *July 25th.*

"If these works were dug up by some archæologist they would immediately be hailed as masterpieces."

—EDGAR WALLACE.

CHAPTER SIX

IN THE STUDIO

MODELLING AND CARVING—SYMBOLISM AND REALISM
—ON PORTRAITURE, CHARACTER AND LIKENESS—
NAMING A WORK—DISTORTION IN ART—ROUGH
SURFACE TREATMENT

(WE are surrounded by sculptures. It is difficult to select or even to see the work at all clearly. Much of it is shrouded in dust sheets, and it is there in great quantity.

One of the most arresting pieces is the bust of Lord Rothermere, perhaps the finest portrait bust of our times. It is a work of unusual strength that gives the illusion, as do so many of Epstein's works, of being in heroic size, till one examines the mass of subtle detail that has gone to its making. It is entirely unforced and untheatrical, no one point is exaggerated unduly in order to produce an immediate effect of power, in the manner of so many of Bourdelle's works, yet it is undoubtedly romantic. A refutation of the idea that a toga is a more fitting garment for a public man than a coat and collar.

CARVING AND MODELLING

Its true place is in the Bargello. In striking contrast are the many female busts, one in particular, Rebecca, the very embodiment of youth, with her sharp shoulder blades, finely modelled neck and her tress of tightly-curved hair.

The heroic bronze Madonna and Child is also there. In the centre of the room is a large carved white marble figure, the subject of much of our discussion. I have seen it many times. It gives the immediate impression of immense size, and then one notices the careful delicate carving of the hands and back, the perfect poise of the body. It is a reverent and beautiful symbol of birth.)

A. L. H. I have just read an article in which the writer makes a very definite distinction between modelling and carving, and finally arrives at the puzzling conclusion that modelling is a very limited and inferior art, almost a craft in fact. On paper his views were very far from clear, but now that I see your modelled Madonna and Child, the Rothermere bust and this new carving, his ideas seem to me more vague than ever.

EPSTEIN. That is another case of art seen through the purely literary mind. There is apparently something romantic about the idea of the statue imprisoned in the block of stone, man wrestling with nature. Michael Angelo himself has written a

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poem about the subject, but he was a modeller as well as a carver. According to the modern view Rodin stands nowhere. He is patronised as a modeller of talent, even of genius, but merely as a modeller. As a matter of fact nearly all the great sculptors of the Renaissance were modellers as well. Verrocchio is almost entirely a modeller, Donatello modelled many of his most important works. Personally I find the whole discussion entirely futile and beside the point. It is the result that matters after all. Of the two, modelling, it could be argued logically, and this is said as a logical argument only, seems to me to be the most genuinely creative. It is the creating of something out of nothing. An actual building up and getting to grips with the material. In carving the suggestion for the form of the work often comes from the shape of the block. In fact inspiration is always modified by the material, there is no complete freedom, while in modelling the artist is entirely unfettered by anything save the technical difficulties of his own chosen subject. As I see sculpture it must not be rigid. It must quiver with life, while carving often leads a man to neglect the flow and rhythm of life. Take the case of *The Sick Child* (for reproduction opposite).

Twenty years ago I would have simplified the hair of the child into what critics call "true sculp-



THE RT. HON. THE VISCOUNT ROTHERMERE, P.C.
(Detail of Bust, 1928)

SYMBOLISM AND REALISM

tural form," while to-day I find a rhythm in the hair of each individual head that I must capture. The majority of views on the subject of the treatment of hair come from a misunderstanding of Greek work. Hair with the Greeks was a very living thing, not at all conventionalised, except in the many cases where the work was to be painted. People forget that much Greek work comes to us quite incomplete, even when it is not obviously broken. It was in so many cases intended to be painted.

A. L. H. In any case for once they cannot put you in the wrong. You are both modeller and carver.

EPSTEIN. I am a sculptor. The distinction is purely an imaginary one, except to the artist in the actual execution of his work.

A. L. H. People often tell me they admire your bronzes immensely, but shake their heads when your carvings are mentioned. Indeed at the Leicester Galleries I heard an old lady complaining bitterly that such wonderful works as the *Joan Greenwood* should be shown in the same room as Epstein's *Genesis*!

EPSTEIN. Most people who are pleased at the bronzes do not really understand them from a sculptural point of view. There are two aspects from which they can be taken; as interesting human beings, as interesting sculpture. As you know I do

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not rule out the first. It is a perfectly natural point of view, but it must be accompanied by the second as well. In my carved work the first does not exist, and the majority of people are lost as a result. Think of the subjects of my carvings; Rima, Day, Night, Genesis—everyone of them entirely abstract subjects, and in the first three cases subjects that must be in harmony with architectural settings. In *The Visitation* I have treated of the same subject as in *Genesis*. The interest of the first is in an individual, of the second in a symbol—of course the interest of both is sculptural, but that is not taken into consideration by the majority. The typical reaction on seeing *The Visitation* may well be, "Poor woman, what suffering." The spectator will to a certain extent identify himself with the subject, that factor is nearly always present. With a symbolical work that is impossible, so that the spectator without a feeling for sculpture will rather resent the fact that the sculptor's imagination is so different from his. I could perfectly well take any one of my models and create a work called "Day" or "Night," but that would not express what I felt about Day or Night, it would merely be "Miss X in the role of Day or Night"—a totally different thing. It is therefore not a question with most people of preferring my modelling to my carving, but of preferring the subjects I choose to model rather than those I choose to carve



THE SICK CHILD
(1928)

ON PORTRAITURE

—of preferring something more concrete to something that requires an effort to understand. They have ruled out artistic considerations entirely. Symbolism is always open to attack. Rodin's *Balzac*, one of his greatest works and at the same time his most criticised, is symbolical. It is not just a portrait of Balzac, it represents Balzac and his work. People will not make an effort to understand art. Everything comes so easily nowadays. Art almost alone cannot make any concessions. I certainly will not explain my work. The explanation lies in the work itself. It is my last word.

A. L. H. That is very clearly illustrated in the story of Schumann, who was pestered to explain the inner meaning of one of his works. "Of course I can explain," he said, and sat down, and played the work all over again.

EPSTEIN. (Looking at one of his portraits) People often say with malicious pleasure on seeing their friends' portraits, "You have brought out all his worst qualities," or "It is uncanny how you have seen into his soul." I do not try to do anything of the kind, and in most cases they are usually quite wrong about the bad qualities. I give a complete portrait, and a sculptural work as well, by bringing out what is interesting and significant in a face. I aim at a likeness based on outward appearance, but people read into a work or imagine things

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that the artist never intended or in fact never expressed at all.

(A comment from a guest.) "But it is for us to tell you what is in a work. An artist is the last person to judge his own work."

EPSTEIN. That is not at all true. Just another superstition. People see the artist as a medium, possessed by a certain force that he cannot control or reason about. I am fully conscious of what I am doing, and can judge the result and the character of my sitters. This whole idea of the somnambulist artist was set going by Rodin, when he said to some journalists probably to flatter them, "I don't know exactly what I meant to do here. You help me. What would you call it?" Actually Rodin was a highly reasoning artist, fully conscious of every effect.

Most of these works here are uncommissioned, but I cannot afford to refuse commissions and do not believe in people who are supposed to. It is generally imagined that a much-talked-of artist is inevitably a very wealthy man. Only to-day on the bus I heard an example of this. A little girl said to her father, "Daddy, that's Epstein sitting there opposite." The man stared at me hard for some time and then shook his head. "It certainly looks like him, but Epstein wouldn't travel on a bus."

I have never found commissioned work un-



THE VISITATION
(The National Gallery, Millbank)
(1926)

PORTRAITURE, CHARACTER & LIKENESS

interesting. Often when I have seen the sitter for the first time I start the work without any real urge or enthusiasm, but finally I always find myself interested in the various problems involved, the modelling of the face, the shape of the skull. The only impossible sitters are those who pretend to be something different from what they are, who are playing a part, and who pose consciously with effort and determination. A well-known actress for instance who has become closely identified with a certain character, and who ceases to be herself. The difficulty does not lie in the sitter's physical appearance, but in his attitude. Men are very often exceedingly vain. I remember an American, whose bust I was doing once, who looked at the finished work and said:

"Surely I haven't got a nose like that?"

"I have studied you for a long time. You have."

"Well then, can't you cheat nature a little?" he replied.

A. L. H. In portraiture to produce a really creative and living work you do 'cheat' nature a little, don't you?

EPSTEIN. No, the artist doesn't cheat nature, but he must translate it, and render it as he sees it. People sometimes sneer at portraiture and say of an artist, "Oh, he's just a good portrait painter." Well Rembrandt painted some good portraits. What a

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magnificent work the aged self-portrait in the National Gallery is. It is like sculpture. It makes all the others look tame, flat and lifeless. Portraiture is fully creative. There is no question of cheating nature, but it is impossible to copy nature exactly. A mathematically correct rendering of a person would neither be a work of art nor a likeness. It is always necessary to accentuate some particular trait that gives the character to the face and distinguishes it from other faces. A man is an artist because he has the necessary judgment and skill to know what accentuation is necessary. The ordinary person in his everyday life always seizes upon some particular characteristic in his process of recognition, and if he were normally observant he could give a description of what he had seen. But it would not be necessary in order to make his portrait recognisable to go into every minute detail. While every detail goes to make up the portrait, the details are of varying importance. The artist is trained to recognise their importance. I can make this clearer still to the layman by giving an example that is in the experience of all educated people. When reading a book the eye only takes in a certain proportion of the words, say seventy per cent. The eye will travel along a sentence, skipping automatically here and there. Though all the words must be put in by the author, they are of varying

CONRAD'S PORTRAIT

importance. There are certain key words that are vital. The same exactly is the case with painting and sculpture. It is those key features in nature that must be discovered and given prominence to by the artist.

I remember once having to finish a work from a life mask, a long and painful process for the sitter, and a series of photographs. I had to abandon it. It was completely lifeless. It is necessary for the artist to translate what he has seen into terms of his art, but never to copy it. It would be easy with the necessary instruments to give an exact copy of any face, but it would not require an artist, merely a competent workman.

In setting out to do a portrait, I do not observe the sitter for a long time first, but commence work right away and the likeness already exists in the first stages. There is no question of making just a head, and then putting in the features and getting a likeness with a few finishing touches, though the finishing touches accentuate the already existing likeness. The basis of the likeness lies in the shape of the skull and in the bony structure of the face, which I accentuate at times. In order to gain the first impression of the character of a head it is often necessary to view it at an unusual angle, from up above or from down below. Sometimes a section of the head, the band running round the forehead

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

will give the salient points that characterise that particular head from all others. Both profiles must be carefully studied. I had imagined that it was elementary knowledge that the two sides of a face are always dissimilar, until you told me of the startling discovery of a well-known art critic about my work. A careful study of these differences also creates life and likeness.

My bust of Conrad brought out his fierce, almost demoniac, energy, but I did not try to read into his psychology—I went entirely by what I saw. Another sculptor made a highly romanticised bust of him, and tried to depict him as the Conrad of the sea, with an open collar and a set dramatic expression. Nothing could be more in error than such a conception. I never once saw him without those high collar-points that dug so deeply into his chin that I wondered how he could endure them. In portraiture the artist must depict what he sees of his sitter and not be influenced by what he knows or thinks he knows about him. I always set out conscientiously to give as good a likeness as I can. Without that a portrait has no value as such. All the greatest portraits have been likenesses as well as works of art. We are convinced of that when we see the works of Rembrandt, Rubens, Velasquez or Degas. Many artists to-day say that the art in a portrait and not the likeness counts. That is merely

THE MADONNA AND CHILD

to excuse their poor results. They evade the issue through lack of skill.

When the work is completed, its presentation can add a great deal of character to it. For instance, the jewelled ornamentation of my bust "La Belle Juive," which accentuates the throat and neck, or the draped handkerchief in the bust of Miss Powys. Critics are fond of saying nowadays that it is wrong for a sculptor to be interested in the different facial characteristics of people and have invented a 'psychological school' of which I have been appointed leader, as opposed to a purely sculptural school. Actually neither exists. The Greeks were exceedingly interested in facial characteristics. They had no 'stock faces' for Venus.

The difficulties of putting down what one sees are accentuated in a self-portrait. I have made two attempts at self-portraiture. The first was an utter failure and I destroyed it. It is an exceedingly difficult thing in a self-portrait to put down what one sees and not what one knows about oneself and feels should be there. Moreover, in sculpture the mechanical difficulties are immense. Looking in a mirror the painter can see something of what his composition will be, but the sculptor must study his subject from every angle. Rodin has called sculpture the art of endless profiles. I know of very few successful self-portraits. The Rembrandt in the

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

National Gallery is the finest example of all. A study of a prematurely old and disappointed man, full of understanding, but with absolutely no forced self-pity. Another remarkably objective self-portrait is the Van Gogh, "L'Homme à l'Oreille Coupée." It is the picture of a madman, done by a painter who realises his own madness in a cold, detached and entirely dispassionate manner.

(We are now standing in front of the deeply moving *Madonna and Child*, which gives the whole studio the air of a cathedral.)

EPSTEIN. People have said that I aim consciously at ugliness. That is absurd, no artist would aim consciously at ugliness. I doubt whether an artist aims consciously at producing beauty either. I try to express the character of what I am depicting. The spiritual element that you tell me you see in my *Madonna and Child* results no doubt from the fact that throughout the work I knew that my subject was not just an ordinary mother and child. Beauty, mysticism, psychology and the various qualities of the kind that people see in an artist's work may come from the outside. If a sculptor is called a master psychologist that is an erroneous way of saying that he is a master sculptor.

A. L. H. Karsavina has often told me that in the dance those extra qualities that make a dancer into an artist come from a mastery of technique, when



THE RT. HON. JAMES RAMSAY MACDONALD, P.C.
(1926)

NAMING A WORK

the body feels entirely free and unrestrained. Like you she denies all the vague generalisations of sudden inspiration without the perfect executive instrument.

EPSTEIN. There are too many amateurs in English art, anæmic academicians, who misunderstand the very artists they claim to follow. X copies Maillol, diluting him considerably in the process, while Y copies X with a further loss of strength.

A. L. H. Octave Mirbeau summed up that type of English art admirably when he wrote of "L'art onaniste des Pré-Raphaélites."

(We have now come to the large marble carving, afterwards named *Genesis*.)*

A. L. H. I suppose that people will judge this work purely on the hint you give them in the name?

EPSTEIN. That is so. When once I named a work *Study* they were completely silent, waiting for some hint of my intention. The newspapers, however, managed to work up some 'sensation,' not about the work itself this time. It was to be shown at the Leicester Galleries, and I had arranged with the directors not to show it till then. A perfectly normal thing that every artist might do before a show. I was surprised to see headlines: "Secret Figure by Epstein," "Studio Mystery," and the like. The

* See Illustration, facing p. 82.

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

lower the paper, the more was made of it. Later they were totally unable to discuss the work itself, or the 'mystery' that really lies in art.

The name of a work does not interest me particularly, it is only useful for catalogue purposes. In spite of the fact that I have to look for names for my works, it must not be imagined that I have not consciously created them as they are. A work such as this (*Genesis*) is the result of years of experiment. In this particular case the literary and the plastic ideas came at the same time. It is now only a question of finding an appropriate name to an idea that is already expressed in the work. Rodin would often flatter people by letting them suggest what a work represented, but that was all bluff. This is only waiting for a title, like an already written novel. I purposely avoid giving fancy names to works in order to stir up artificial interest. That belongs to the academicians, and to the painter of the 'picture of the year.' I mean to express by this work the feeling of "In the Beginning," the commencement of things.

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A. L. H. It is an extraordinary thing how much the word 'distortion' is used nowadays as a term of abuse, and yet there is no work of art where some form of distortion is not used.



THE MADONNA AND CHILD
(Detail)

DISTORTION IN ART

EPSTEIN. If distortion means a departure from nature, every bronze is a distortion. A man could make a wax portrait in close imitation of nature, but what a fool he would be to do so. Every painter by the very fact of being a painter is guilty of distortion in painting three dimensional objects in two dimensions.] These distortions should both be objected to if the 'copy nature' people, who have been writing to the *Morning Post*, carried their arguments to a logical conclusion. Apart from the fact that he was a painter, even Ingres, the great draughtsman who cautioned his pupils almost daily, 'copiez la nature,' forbade them the use of a skeleton, and refused to enter the studio when there was one present, and he himself certainly departed from nature in the *Odalisque* with her elongated spine.

A. L. H. Ingres was the not unusual case of a man who has been misunderstood, because he so deliberately misunderstood and deceived himself, and paved the way for the usual charge against him that he was a 'milk-and-water Raphael.' He was a rebel forced into the false position of an academician through his hatred for Delacroix and Romanticism. Ingres is continually used by the academicians to attack the modern artist because of what he said and not because of what he did. They have completely misunderstood him. At his best he was very genuinely creative. Technique after all surely means the

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knowledge and the ability to use distortion with tact.

EPSTEIN. 'Distortion' is the translation by the artist of nature as he sees it, into his particular medium. What has suddenly drawn so much attention to it is its exaggeration by certain followers of Cézanne. Where Cézanne himself leans a house at a certain angle in order to gain a definitely calculated effect in his composition, they have their houses tumbling all over the picture in an entirely meaningless fashion. The followers of an outstanding personality always copy and exaggerate not only his entirely personal characteristics, but also his carefully calculated effects. Michael Angelo in the flush of his anatomical discoveries 'distorts' in the sense that he gives play to a variety of muscles in a manner that is not entirely naturalistic, just as Pollaiuolo had done before, or Paolo Uccello with his use of angles, when he first tumbled into the fascinating secret of perspective. But Michael Angelo was a genius and his 'distortion' is never meaningless. His followers indulged in a restless orgy of muscle. That is what the word 'distortion' in its derogatory sense should really mean. But both the artist who works with full creative consciousness, and those who seize upon a formula and exaggerate, depart from a faithful rendering of nature. The whole training of an artist should be to make him feel

SURFACE TREATMENT

when deviations from nature have a plastic meaning, and add something definite to the work. If we had to follow the Hon. John Collier's advice in this morning's paper every painter would be a photographer and every sculptor merely a taker of casts, while even this would not be a 'faithful reproduction of nature' carried to its logical conclusion. According to that theory, given an interesting model, every mechanic could produce great works of art. The acquiring of technique would be an utter waste of time. After all, why do laboriously what a machine can do so efficiently? In fact, a machine has actually been invented that will make busts from photographs. An enterprising salesman tried to sell me one, in order to leave me some leisure for more interesting work.

A. L. H. Even the Hon. John Collier would be unnecessary. He has himself destroyed his entire 'raison d'être.'

EPSTEIN. Such people have an entirely wrong conception of the Greeks. They view the work so academically that they can only see a certain arrangement of line, and miss altogether the depth and mystery that lie behind it, also they are so hypnotised by the word Greek, that they cannot distinguish between good and bad periods. The Laocoon and The Dying Gaul are inferior works at whatever period they were produced. Leighton

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in his *Boy Wrestling with a Serpent* copies all the superficialities of a thoroughly bad period of Greek art. We cannot go on eternally working like the Greeks. In order to do that it is necessary to think like the Greeks. We can learn what the Greeks had to teach and adapt it to our own times. That is not 'distortion' used in its customary derogatory sense. Since the time of the Greeks there have been Michael Angelo, Donatello and Verrocchio and all the discoveries of earlier civilisations.

The Greeks used 'distortion' in its finer sense, meaning a sculptural interpretation of nature, while to depart from them is to have the word hurled at one abusively. That perhaps is the best explanation of the word in its two meanings.

A. L. H. The Greek 'idée fixe' that we have talked about is also well shown at the present day by these expeditions of young 'Duncan girls' clad in Greek costume, who pose round the Parthenon, without the slightest knowledge of Greek thought, and, what is more ridiculous, of Greek music.

The very reason for Ingres' superiority over David in the treatment of a classical subject was that David went straight to Greek statuary, while Ingres, though he may have been wrong, tried to render what he knew and felt about the Greeks.

EPSTEIN. Being influenced by a work is a very different thing from copying it, although critics use

SURFACE TREATMENT

the word so loosely. It is something far more subtle. A merely academic understanding of the work of another sculptor is a harmful thing to the creative artist.

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A. L. H. Your particular rough surface treatment seems to upset many people. They will admire a work until they examine the detail, and then their reaction will be, "Oh, another distortion. Why?"

EPSTEIN. It is the rough surface that gives both character and likeness to the face, not just the rough surface as such, but the particular individual treatment. No face is entirely round and smooth. The face is made up of numberless small planes and it is a study of where those planes begin and end, their direction, that makes the individual head. This is generally understood in painting. In sculpture it would be an easy mechanical matter to polish and sandpaper until the material was entirely smooth, but to do that would be really to produce a grave distortion. The reflection of the light would play havoc with all the sculptor's effects, while the rough surface breaks up the light, and accentuates the characteristics, giving life to the work.

A. L. H. I have noticed at many recent exhibitions how much sculptors are influenced by your methods. They use the rough surface entirely

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without discretion, merely to break up the light. It gives the unpleasant impression of skin disease or the remains of an attack of smallpox.

EPSTEIN. That is because they make the work smooth and then roughen it afterwards as an afterthought. The texture is a definite and inseparable part of the whole; it comes from inside so to speak; it grows with the work.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PRIVATE VIEW DAYS

GENESIS—A DISCUSSION ON BAROQUE SCULPTURE—
AFRICAN ART—THE MEANING OF “INFLUENCES” IN
ART

(It is the day of the Press view of the exhibition of *Genesis* and other works at the Leicester Galleries. Epstein is rarely to be seen at a gallery where his works are on view. The whole atmosphere irritates him, the congratulations both sincere and insincere, the whispering and the gossip. The beginning of a show marks the end of a period, the studio looks bare and uninhabited and the sculptor is busy planning new works. The ‘clou’ of the whole day for me has been Epstein’s retort to an art critic [gossip writer] from one of the biggest dailies.)

REPORTER. Mr. Epstein, why do you do such ugly things?

EPSTEIN. I don’t think them ugly. There can be two opinions about beauty. Some people might think you handsome, while I think the reverse.

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The reporter has rushed off to the Leicester Galleries, but has been refused admission as the Press view is not yet opened. But the next day an article appears on the news page signed with his initial and headed "Epstein at his worst." I am indignant at the dishonesty, but Epstein only laughs.

"I cannot protest. My business is to get on with my own work, not to defend it in the Press. You are indignant because you are not used to these things. You mustn't put your indignation into my mouth in this book or you will be misrepresenting me entirely. I have already had to cut out a good many paragraphs from some early chapters. I don't mind criticism. If there were none, I would be quite certain that something was wrong with my work."

The day has been an interesting one. I have actually assisted at the beginnings of an Epstein sensation. All the morning photographers from the newspapers have trained their cameras on *Genesis*. In vain Mr. Phillips protests that there is other work of interest and considerable merit. They are not impressed. They have had their instructions. They are not indignant or even interested in the carving. Their business is to get photographs, the indignation will be worked up in the office.

In the afternoon the art critics arrive. They are reserved and exceedingly suspicious of one another.



MARCHESA CASATI
(1918)

THE PRIVATE VIEW OF *GENESIS*

They view the work from amazing angles, closing one eye as they stoop close to the ground. They make little marks in their catalogue. *Genesis* cannot amaze them. They approach it with an air of familiarity, praise it with the reservation that of course "Epstein is purely and merely a modeller and cannot carve" and then proceed to pull it to pieces, using an extraordinary jargon to justify themselves. I overheard one criticism that has greatly amused Epstein. "I can understand the work till I get to the head, and then I find the eyebrows definitely too literary."

The critics mean well. It is obvious that the news editor is the villain of the piece, and has set going every Epstein sensation.

The next day also, during the private view, I sat down, pencil in hand, to listen to the lay opinion. Heated discussion was frequent throughout the whole exhibition, and people with no real reaction felt themselves bound to register some definite opinion, in order to show their great interest in art. I quote this typical conversation (it is absolutely accurate), as it shows the type of person who judges the work of an Epstein. The critics on the previous day were no better.

FIRST PERSON. "There is a remarkably religious atmosphere about *Genesis*."

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SECOND PERSON. (Sneering) "Yes, a religion from the East."

FIRST PERSON. "Do you know a religion that doesn't come from the East?"

(Second person walks off disgruntled to reappear at intervals.)

FIRST PERSON. "It shows what power the sculptor must have put into his work to make an otherwise harmless idiot so offensive."

Another Group

MASCULINE-LOOKING WOMAN. "I find Epstein has become very academic. I quite like the statue, but I object to the name. With that name he should have expressed an amœba."

When I told this to Epstein he said:

"Yes, many have told me that I should have made the head a mere blob. How easy they try to make sculpture."

I dine with Epstein that night. The atmosphere is one of absolute calm. I tell him what has happened, and give vent to my indignation, but I cannot rouse him. He shows me, with a smile, an abusive letter from an honest householder in Richmond, "It is time you artists stopped somewhere." I try to convince him of my theory, or rather Somerset Maugham's, adapted from *Cakes and Ale*,

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that if only he lives to eighty he will be called the "Grand Old Man of English Sculpture" and *Genesis* will be bought for the nation by popular subscription. The bell rings, we are interrupted by the entrance of a gossip writer, whom Epstein proceeds to interview.

EPSTEIN. "What qualifications have you to discuss art? Have you ever been to the National Gallery?"

G. W. "Yes, on one occasion to shelter from the rain."

EPSTEIN. "That is honest enough. Where are you going when you have finished with me?"

G. W. "To interview a woman chess champion."

EPSTEIN. "If she talks to you about the finer points of chess, would you understand her?"

G. W. "No. I can't play chess."

This interruption over, we start a conversation far removed from the day's happenings.

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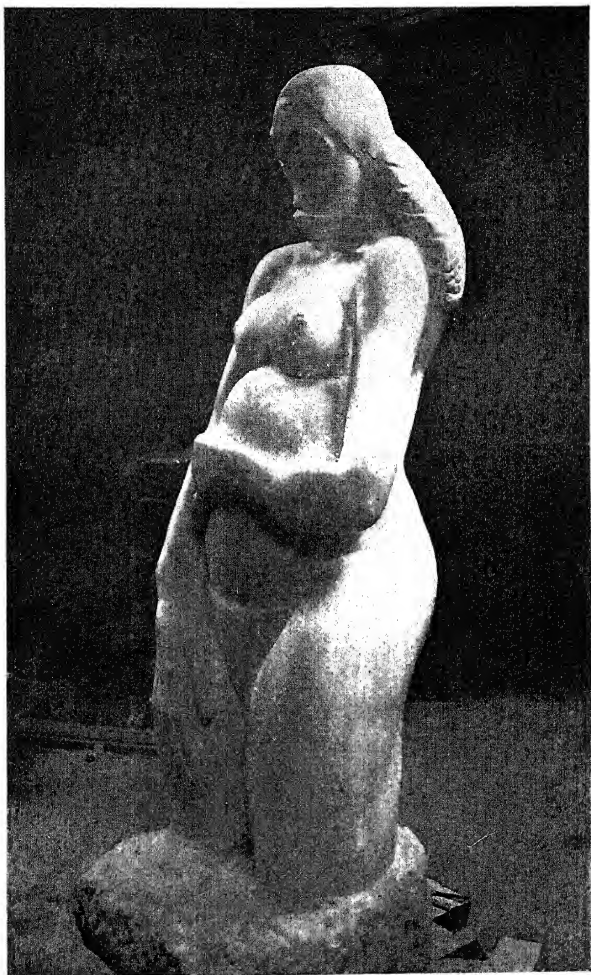
A. L. H. What do you think of the sudden vogue of baroque art? Some people believe that you are influenced by it.

EPSTEIN. I have never been very much interested in baroque. I imagine that its popularity is just a

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passing fashion due to a very natural reaction from the anæmic products of the Academy, and the stylistic objects from the shop-windows of Bond St. and the Rue de la Paix. Baroque may be very pleasing in its proper setting, under the right sky, but it is quite impossible in Westminster Abbey, for instance, and far too restless in a museum.

There is a very great difference between genuine vitality and the forced dramatic element of baroque. Michael Angelo is called the father of baroque, but there is no trace of that restlessness in his work. He is very much an unwilling father. Baroque came into being through pygmies trying to follow a giant. Michael Angelo was too remote to have any followers of note. Donatello, who had perhaps greater contact with life, was the safer man to follow as a chef d'école, and did produce many remarkable followers. The artist who possesses genuine strength will not need, whatever subject he is treating, to descend to restless theatricality. It is interesting to compare Bourdelle's large equestrian statue with the Colleoni and the Gattamelata. At first sight the Bourdelle may appear grand and impressive, but it is very forced and hollow. The Donatello and the Verrocchio produce a thrill in a far more subtle manner. They do not make a parade of their strength. It is held in reserve, so that the effect is not exhausted at a first glance. They are full of vitality, but they have



GENESIS
(Marble 1931)

BAROQUE

at the same time that repose, that is so essential in a work of art and that gives one a feeling of finality. The baroque artist has to exaggerate in order to produce an effect. He has continually to seek the aid of fancy dress, to clothe his sitters, in a toga to lend them a dignity, which the work itself should give. Ingres, in his famous portrait of Monsieur Bertin, is able to suggest the whole atmosphere of dignity that surrounds his sitter, without in any way resorting to 'truquage.' The artist, who may at first sight seem serene and gentle, is usually far stronger than the man who uses bulging muscles and a restless composition to attract attention. It is the same in music—the strong pianist is not the one who emerges from a sonata completely exhausted mentally and physically. Strength in reserve is the true strength. *Potential* energy is the essence of Michael Angelo's work.

Some people say that my work is baroque, but I cannot see it. I aim at the same thing as the baroque artist up to a certain point, and that is vitality, but my methods are entirely different. I am inspired by nature and try to translate nature into sculpture. The baroque artist goes to nature through the intermediary of the theatre. I have this in common with baroque, however, I am interested in humanity and not in the abstract. The treatment of *Genesis* is the very contrary of baroque. Here is a subject



THE HON. STEPHEN TENNANT
(1926)

AFRICAN SCULPTURE

spite of the quantity of the work, I feel that the word 'collection' gives a false impression. There is none of the deadness of the museum here, and the works have not lost their individuality. Each piece is examined, discussed and gives the very maximum of pleasure. In the same room there is a fine sculptural drawing by Modigliani, all the more perfect for the company it keeps.)

A. L. H. These negro carvings are the very reverse of baroque. What simplicity and restraint. How much mystery.

EPSTEIN. I first began to collect negro sculpture some twenty-five years ago, at the same time as Picasso, Vlaminck and Matisse, before it had been properly 'discovered', and was considered the correct thing to have and to admire. Perhaps at that time one of its greatest attractions was the fact that it was the only sculpture that I could afford.

Negro sculpture is amazingly popular at the present day, but it is still generally misunderstood, and there are not many facilities for studying it as *art*. In the past all interest in it has been purely from the ethnographical side, and it has been displayed in museums with that in view, as a running commentary on folk-lore, in fact. Many people have thought it hideous, and have dismissed it without further thought, as the work of savages. In negro art each work must be taken on its merits.

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

There can be none of the magic of the artist's name, that so often blinds the judgment, the very dates are highly problematical, and although the work of each particular district has certain well-marked characteristics, as you will see, there are very many works that cannot be clearly classified. The work is either good or bad. No professor's signed certificate can make it into a collector's piece, though probably that is not far off.

To start with, in looking at negro sculpture one must realise that it is not something absolutely and entirely apart, cut off from all other art. It is governed by the same considerations that govern all sculpture. In every good school of sculpture there are certain values quite apart from any interest in the object represented. The *Vénus de Milo* is very much more than just a beautiful woman. The person, who will not look or feel beyond the representation itself, cannot comprehend the very essence of sculpture, though he will easily persuade himself that he understands the Greek ideal, and that the work of the primitive negro is unworthy of study.

The first point that must be realised, is that this negro sculpture is not turned out to a definite pattern laid down by tribal custom, though the artist is certainly bound to a certain extent, in the same manner as the Renaissance artist was in

AFRICAN SCULPTURE

depicting a holy family. Although we know none of their names, the finest examples of African art are the works of highly individualised artists, with an outlook and a technique all their own. I can pick out pieces in my own collection that I am convinced are the work of one particular artist.

To generalise: the chief features of negro art are, its simplification and directness, the union of naturalism and design, and its striking architectural qualities.

The object and inspiration of the majority of negro sculpture were religious, the masks were used for ceremonial purposes such as initiations, and the statues were tribal fetishes. The directness and simplification are a result of this: the necessity of producing a feeling of awe and fear. This simplification, and the tendency towards abstraction that has influenced the present day artist to such an extent, heightens the dramatic effect. It is a great mistake however to lose sight of the naturalism. In much of the work there is great anatomic truth to be found, extremely simplified, and often expressed architecturally.

The modern artist some years before the war, at about the time of the discovery of negro art, was experimenting in a similar manner. The very first periods of cubism are an attempt at a compromise between naturalism and design. The artist is

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

unwilling to sacrifice the representation of some well-known object, his best introduction to the public, but at the same time he seeks a freedom from academic art, made all the more urgent by the introduction of photography; a reaction also from the deliberate and scientific methods of the impressionists, as represented by Monet, a reaction begun by the impressionists themselves, Renoir and Cézanne.

The African arrived at this compromise without the particular necessity or the involved reasoning of the European artist, but his work was discovered just in time to provide some means of escape. A few years earlier the Japanese colour-print had also suggested to artists another manner in which to look at, and to depict nature. For a time the chief influence of negro art was towards complete abstraction, but its true influence should be to suggest new ways of interpreting nature. A primitive art is always a sounder influence than one that is highly sophisticated. The culminating artists of a fruitful period inevitably leave in their trail a host of inferior artists. The true spirit of their work is hidden for many generations, and abstracted into a mere formula. Leonardo, Raphael and Michael Angelo, coming all in one short period, completely ended for many generations the supremacy of Italian art, just as the impressionists

AFRICAN SCULPTURE

themselves reached a complete impasse. When such a situation arises, it is in primitive art that fresh inspiration is to be found. Gauguin, seeking refuge in Tahiti, is symbolical of all such movements.

Perhaps of all artists Modigliani has used this influence to the greatest advantage. Where others have been hesitating and experimental, he has expressed himself with full confidence.

I remember him well in Paris. During his lifetime he would sell a drawing for a drink, or a picture for a few square meals. Very few dealers understood his work and it did not reach the public. It was at his funeral that prices began to soar, and now there are examples of his work in most museums and large collections, and canvases fetch from two to three thousand pounds. He has become the first master of the negro influence.

Although negro sculpture has been collected now for over thirty years, we are still only at the beginning of the subject, and there are endless investigations to be made. The work that is known, is nothing to that which is awaiting to be discovered some day.

A. L. H. The best research that can be made is by the sculptor, who is sufficiently sensitive to feel all its plastic qualities, and who can view it purely as an artist and not as an archæologist.

EPSTEIN. On the contrary. Æsthetically it is fairly well understood. We must now know some-

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

thing more about the people who produced it, their customs and their magic. All these pieces were made for some definite purpose, as household gods, burial sculpture or masks used for initiations and meetings of secret societies: for instance, these Gabun heads with their long pole-like necks. The negro is buried in a seated position, his neck and head protruding. These heads are realistic works, obviously the result of a very minute study of nature. You can see the well-developed bony structure of the forehead, the sunken eyes, protruding jawbone and the flesh round the mouth and nose shrinking, as if to crumble away. They are burial symbols. A deeper knowledge of tribal custom would support the view that these works are mainly realistic.

A. L. H. Many people say that negro art has had a powerful influence on you.

EPSTEIN. That is both true and untrue. I do not think that it is at all true in the way most people mean it. They use it as a purely superficial judgment. If any work of mine takes them out of their depth they rely on some easy generalisation, and talk of the oriental influence on my work, lumping African, Chaldean or Indian together quite loosely, merely to signify something that does not enter into their experience. I think that the chief reason that they hit upon the supposed African influence is the



BIBLICAL SUBJECT
(Pencil and Wash Drawing)

MODIGLIANI

fact that I have modelled so many African types, such as *Lydia* or *Daisy Dunn*.^{*} I am interested in the negro type of beauty, but the results are purely traditional and European in technique. The fact that I had a Russian or an Indian model would not mean that I was influenced by Russian or Indian art. The *Israfel* is taken from an Indian model, but it is purely Greek in feeling (or at any rate seems to me to be so). Modelling is not an African form of art with the exception of course of the Benin bronze, so that nothing can be further removed from African art than my portraits of African women.

I am influenced by African sculpture in the same manner that all primitive work must influence the artist. African work has certain important lessons to teach that go to the root of all sculpture. I have tried to absorb those lessons without working in the African idiom. It would indeed be absurd for a European artist in these days to produce African idols, and like all imitation it would be insincere, but the African has lessons that would benefit the most sophisticated of present day sculptors, just as the primitive caveman artist stumbled, centuries ago, upon problems of draughtsmanship, shared by the French classicist Ingres, and the sophisticated Pablo Picasso. There are no sharp dividing lines in art, and artists, separated by centuries and continents,

^{*} See illustrations, facing pp. 150 and 135.

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will enjoy the same experiences, and hit upon the same truths, in some cases by intuition, in others by a complicated process of reasoning. When a certain movement is in the air, it will be assimilated in a hundred different manners. The feeling of hostility to classicism bred a romantic movement that produced a Delacroix in painting, a Victor Hugo in literature, a Berlioz in music and a Barye in sculpture. While a few years later the reaction from Romanticism produced Realism: in painting Courbet whom I call a realist (he was by intention, though actually his outlook is entirely romantic), and in literature, Zola.

It is for such reasons that I cannot understand quite clearly all this talk of influences. It is not at all an easy matter to name the various artists who at one time have influenced one another, and I could not possibly say exactly how or by whom I personally have been influenced. Of course I have been influenced. No artist evolves altogether spontaneously out of nothing, and there is no such thing as an entirely clean slate. The word 'influence' however needs very careful explanation, as it is very loosely used by critics to mean anything, from merely mechanical copying. The phrase so often used in reviews of exhibitions, "X is influenced by Matisse, or Y by Maillol" is nearly always a very polite way of saying, "X and Y possess no real

INFLUENCES

creative minds, they are more or less dexterous copyists of something that has been found successful by Matisse and Maillol." All our academic sculptors are not 'influenced' by Greek art in the sense that I understand the term, they are merely copyists of a period of Greek art that had already worn bare a certain formula. The word 'influence,' as I understand it, means more than a mere surface study, it means a full comprehension of both mind and technique, that go to the composition of a work, and a translation of that, according to the personality of the artist. A complete re-creation in fact through a new mind. In the sense that the word should be used, it is perfectly correct to say that Van Gogh is influenced by Rembrandt, and Degas by Ingres. These influences are very real, they are obvious to the students of the particular artists, but in neither case is there a trace of copying. Every artist without exception is influenced in this manner, often quite unconsciously. The word though is now dangerous through constant misusage.

* * * *

(The next morning I find that the press has managed to work up the usual 'sensation.'

Mr. Tatlock in the *Daily Telegraph*, in the course of a bitter attack, comes out with the remarkable

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

phrase, "There is not a line of poetry, not a note of music in it (*Genesis*).” But then the same writer has said of Rembrandt in discussing the Anatomy School, "We notice as a defect in him his lack of sense of humour.”

Poetry, music, humour! Excellent, Mr. Tatlock; but it clearly shows that Rembrandt alone was not devoid of humour. The ‘stunt’ press follows this lead, and throughout *Genesis* remains uncriticised.)



ISRAFEL
(1930)

CHAPTER EIGHT

PUBLIC MONUMENTS—RUDE AND “LA MARSEILLAISE”
—SUBJECT MATTER IN ART—PICASSO—PRIMITIVE
ART—PERIOD AND NATIONALITY—ARTIST AND
MODEL

THE following extract from the *Observer* of January 25th, 1930, is a better criticism, than any that could be advanced, of the manner in which most of our London statues come to be erected. It forms a useful commentary on what Mr. Epstein has to say on the question of subject matter in sculpture.

I once asked him if he was interested in politics.

“Not especially, though I always read the papers. I have no decided opinions, but as an artist I only pray for one thing—that we have no dictatorship in this country, either Fascist or Communist. Dictatorship is fatal to art, as the case of Toscanini shows so clearly in Italy. In fact, any official interference in art is bad. The real artist has more important things to do than to play at politics. A ministry of art in this country would be quite fatal.”

This is why:

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

(From the *Observer*, Jan. 25, 1931.)

THE NEW HAIG STATUE

SOME MODIFICATIONS TO BE MADE

Mr. George Lansbury, First Commissioner of Works, stated last night that Mr. A. F. Hardiman, the sculptor of the Haig statue, had agreed to carry out suggested modifications of his second model, and Mr. Lansbury revealed, too, that personally he preferred the first statue.

Mr. Lansbury said that he thought the critics had not sufficiently appreciated the fact that the model was not a completed "drawing," but simply a study of what was in the artist's mind.

"This second model has been unanimously approved by the five Assessors, appointed to give their opinion and advise me on the subject. They are five *recognised authorities* on matters connected with art—Lord D'Abernon (the chairman), Sir William Goscombe John, Mr. W. Reynolds-Stephens, Sir Herbert Baker and Mr. A. M. Daniel. Mr. Hardiman has also been advised and very much assisted by General Sir Herbert Lawrence, General Sir Walter Braithwaite, and General Sir Noel Birch, with regard to the accoutrements and the military aspects.

MONUMENTS AND COMMITTEES

"The Assessors say that they appreciate the changes that have been carried out and they have made a few suggestions as to modifications in regard to the horse, which, of course, the artist will carry out. The Assessors' report says that the committee unanimously approve the modified study of the statue and express their appreciation of the changes carried out. They suggest for the artist's consideration the following points: length of horse's neck and vertical line of chest and neck; length of tail and concordance of tail with mane; weathering up of the ground to make the hoofs more visible. Then they say that the base appears less satisfactory than the statue and suggest consultation with Sir Herbert Baker. The artist agrees to all that."

Regarding his own opinion of the model, Mr. Lansbury said: "I am what you might call the man in the street. I know a thing that I like and admire, and I know that other people may disagree. Of the two, I like the first one better. My first impression was not a good one, but afterwards it grew on me. I should really like a blend of the two. My conviction is that *with the criticisms of the committee Mr. Hardiman will produce something that everybody will think very good.*"*

EPSTEIN. You are asking me about public monu-

* Italics inserted.

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

ments. It is of course quite out of the question to find a monument that will please everyone. Take the statue of King Charles I at the top of Whitehall. It is one of the few good statues in London, gay, debonair and full of spirit. It is not a great work of art, but you would certainly imagine that no one could possibly find anything objectionable in it. Yet the late Walter Winans, an amateur sculptor and a famous breeder of horses, was made furious every time he saw it and tried his best to get it removed. He viewed it purely from his standpoint as a breeder of horses. He had never seen anything like it in his stables. From the sculptor's point of view the horse is not at all objectionable. On the contrary it is a charming horse. One of the main reasons why public statues the world over are very rarely of any interest is because the artist is usually bullied by pressure of opinion into producing something that will please the committee and through them the masses. I do not believe that great art can immediately be recognised by the untutored. Perhaps Tolstoi's "mujik" was sufficiently unprejudiced in order to feel the really great. I doubt it. At any rate the "mujik" does not exist here, and everyone is an amateur art critic many times a day.

The result is such a concoction as the Queen Victoria Monument in front of Buckingham Palace, or the ill-proportioned mess at Trafalgar Square, a



HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH
(1925)

MONUMENTS AND COMMITTEES

puny little figure that can scarcely be distinguished, stuck on top of a gigantic pedestal. Whether the work is good or bad at eye level nobody can tell. The artist must allow for the distortions of distance and level. Donatello made careful studies into that question, but evidently they have been forgotten for four hundred years. The lions, too, I find intensely objectionable. Even a formal, purely decorative animal must bear some relation to nature. In fact, in order to produce a synthesis of a lion, to get the essence of the 'lion feeling,' it is necessary to understand nature far more deeply than to be merely a naturalistic sculptor. It is necessary to retain all essentials and to eliminate the unnecessary. The lion in repose must possess potential movement. The Egyptians with their hawks understood this. Another lesson that seems entirely lost.

Rude is a great master of the monumental. I am basing that on only one work of his which I really know, *La Marseillaise* on the Arc de Triomphe. It is unique amongst the public monuments of the world, and unique as a composition in modern art. It is necessary to go back to the Greeks, to the Battle of the Giants, to see such a vast idea so nobly conceived. People who go to Paris rather take the Arc de Triomphe for granted, recognising it as the Unknown Warrior's tomb or as an important centre of the town. I would advise everyone to stop and

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

study Rude's masterpiece and to see how he has achieved violent action and drama (Rodin called it "une vaste tragédie cornélienne"), together with perfect unity in its composition, and repose, used in its artistic sense. By repose I mean that the spectator is not continually distracted by a feeling that the work is coming apart. Compare *La Marseillaise* to *The Quadriga* on Constitution Hill, another work of violent movement, and you will immediately recognise what I mean, and see that the words drama, violent movement and serenity are not ridiculous contradictions, when a composition is handled by such a master as Rude.

A. L. H. I have just been walking in Parliament Square. All our public monuments of deceased statesmen are exceedingly depressing and not a little comical, though I can understand the necessity of showing them in the toga or state robes. I should imagine that the morning coat and top-hat, or lounge suit and felt hat would be a subject incongruous with bronze or stone as a medium.

EPSTEIN. You are wrong. There is no subject that the sculptor or painter cannot render; his field is limitless. The robe and the toga are merely easy means of escaping from a difficult problem of taste and treatment. Their flowing lines make superficial dignity easy, by robbing the subject of all its individuality and character.

RUDE AND *LA MARSEILLAISE*

Top-hats did not prevent Manet from making a good painting. No, the top-hat can be a fascinating subject in art.

A. L. H. André Salmon says, "O Manet, ton haut de forme est plus haut que le Dôme de Florence."

EPSTEIN. I see that you are looking at that vase of flowers in a doubting and critical manner. You are wrong again; that, too, can be rendered in sculpture. Donatello made wonderful use of flowers both in bas-relief and in the round. Even the whole vase and its contents could be rendered, treated in a somewhat abstract manner in the style of Brancusi.

A. L. H. (Pointing to the grand piano) Here at any rate is something totally unfit for sculpture.

EPSTEIN. Certainly not, it has very beautiful lines. I would not mind having a shot at it. In bas-relief it would be comparatively easy. I can imagine a very interesting work with someone at the piano, though probably the interest would centre almost entirely on the player, and the whole piano would be unnecessary. No, there is not a thing that cannot be rendered by the sculptor, except the atmosphere—and even that can be suggested in bas-relief.

[At that moment the front-door bell rings and a timid little girl comes into the room:

"Have you anything for me, Mr. Epstein?"

Epstein puts her off for the time being, but she has pleased him.

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

"There is a beautiful model for you. A dancer, I believe. She figures in the academy this year, but the result is uninteresting. You would have thought that she was a ready-made statue for any competent realist. Some artists copy my work, by copying my models, but they haven't understood that competent realism is not enough. A beautiful model is an inspiration, but the work must be thought out and composed. Everyone is a potential model of interest. I am surprised when I go into a crowd how few really ugly people there are. Rodin once said that nothing in nature was ugly, and he took as an example the remarkable manner in which the wrist was articulated. As everyone possesses such articulations no one can be totally devoid of beauty. The face is a true reflection of character. But who can read faces accurately? I do not believe that people with certain types of face have a corresponding character, but that the face grows like the character, and is a reflection of one's manner of thinking. A child's face is very rarely unpleasant. It is when people start thinking, trying to disguise things, and to be what they are not, that the change comes. A baby's smile is wholly delightful, there is no calculation behind it, it is entirely spontaneous, while a grown-up person's smile may mean such a number of things from the comparatively innocent, "Don't you think I smile beautifully?" or "Isn't my dress

SUBJECT MATTER IN ART

becoming?" to something really unpleasant.]

* * * *

EPSTEIN. I have just returned from the Picasso exhibition. What a remarkable artist, both as a virtuoso and as a man of exquisite taste and sensibility. I cannot always follow him or understand him, but even in his most difficult moods one must treat him with respect. I am not fond, as you know, of abstractions, but even his abstract work is personal and perfect in its taste. It is only when one sees a collection like this, that one realises how very poor his direct imitators and followers are. He is very much too personal and volatile to follow. He is alone amongst modern artists to forsake a style that has become appreciated by the collectors and the public in favour of the purely experimental.

A. L. H. Also, he is almost alone amongst modern easel artists to have adapted his style to the theatre. His décors for Diaghileff in *Pulcinella* and *The Three Cornered Hat* are not merely large projections of his canvases, they are a real departure in theatrical art.

EPSTEIN. Of all the artists influenced by him, Modigliani alone was sufficiently strong to retain his own individuality. He is Picasso's equal as a painter, but not as a technician, and he has not attempted to ape Picasso technically. Picasso is an extremely sophisticated artist.

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A. L. H. The whole trend of modern art seems to be towards extreme sophistication. That is why I cannot understand the way in which the École de Paris links itself, and is linked by others with the Primitives.

EPSTEIN. Nothing has been more misused in modern times than the words "Primitive Art." It has been misused both by the public, who like to see in the work of certain Moderns the primitive spirit, and by many modern artists themselves.

Primitive art does not mean "early art," except when used purely historically, or the art of, what we might call, uncultured people; neither does primitive art mean *childish* art, though it may mean *childlike* art. The greatest error is to use the word as a handy description of Negro art. African art is not primitive either technically or emotionally; on the contrary, it is often extremely subtle and sophisticated, and many of the masks express emotions of great complexity. Early Christian art is truly primitive, but it must be understood that this word does not express a lack of technique but rather a limited technique. The aim of the primitive artist is towards realism and also towards the vivid telling of a story; the expounding of his faith to people who cannot read. The public, for whom these pictures were painted, cannot have viewed them as we do to-day, and the legend of the admiring crowds that

PICASSO

worshipped Cimabue's "Madonna" shows that they must have been struck by its realism and truth. Therefore, the primitive in art is essentially a state of mind possessed both by the artist and by those who see his art. It is quite conceivable that the primitive artist might have shown immense admiration for academic art. We have in fact an example of this in one of the only modern primitives, Douanier Rousseau and his admiration for Bougereau.

We must not admire the primitive artist patronisingly because he is "quaint" or "gauche," which is the usual reaction of people in a museum. To do so is to misunderstand him entirely. We should admire him as we admire any other artist—because of his creative faculty and skill. All Primitives are by no means admirable; many of the later Byzantine artists, for instance, painted in an entirely lifeless manner according to a set formula. In considering the Primitive we must not shut him up into a watertight compartment of his own, either to admire or to condemn, but we must look at him as we look at all artists of whatever period.

The true Primitive in modern art is an impossibility, except as a phenomenon, such as Douanier Rousseau. Many people have said of him that he consciously studied the early Italian painters, but this is most unlikely; also we have certain pictures by Van Gogh, "The Chair" and "The Room

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

at Arles," which possess the true primitive spirit.

It is a great mistake to call Gauguin a Primitive. His effects were all closely calculated, and his use of strong defined zones of colour was a reasoned reaction against Impressionism. His Breton "Christ", which has a primitive appearance, is a very calculated study. Gauguin there wishes to show how Christ would appear to the childlike mind of the Breton peasant, just as later he depicted a Tahiti "Madonna."

It is not possible for an artist at the present day to ignore completely what has gone before. The pre-Raphaelites worked according to this fallacy, but there is not a sign in their work that they had thrown off all the influences of Raphael and his followers. The result may have been unsophisticated but that was all. Again, modern simplification must not be mistaken for primitive art. It is often extremely sophisticated. The whole trend of modern art is towards sophistication. Primitive art is *not* possible without the primitive mind. At the same time the influence of the Primitive on the Modern is very real, in the sense that it turns him towards a fresher and more sincere view of nature. Matisse, when he says that the true attitude of the artist should be to paint like a child of five, is merely using a picturesque phrase to denote a fact that

PRIMITIVE ART

has been true at all periods—that the artist should be complete master of all technical resources, so that he can be free to express real things without constant technical preoccupation.

* * * *

A. L. H. It is always a favourite point with painters and writers on art to say that the truly great artist expresses in his work both his nationality and the spirit of his age; the French, in particular, always exceedingly chauvinistic, have made a great deal of that, and some writers insist that only the painter who is exceedingly national can ever be really international.

EPSTEIN. That is the kind of question one wants notice of . . . No, I don't think I agree with that view. It is very superficial and it seems to express only a partial truth. The two—nationality and time—go hand in hand, but we must separate them in examining this matter. First as to nationality: only the small master seems to me to express his country alone, while the great artist is telling some universal truth that he has experienced. We can find numerous examples. It is never any use generalising in such arguments as they easily get out of control and run away with you. Let us come down to the concrete. Longhi, Teniers and Zoffany are three small masters who express nationality above all else; or,

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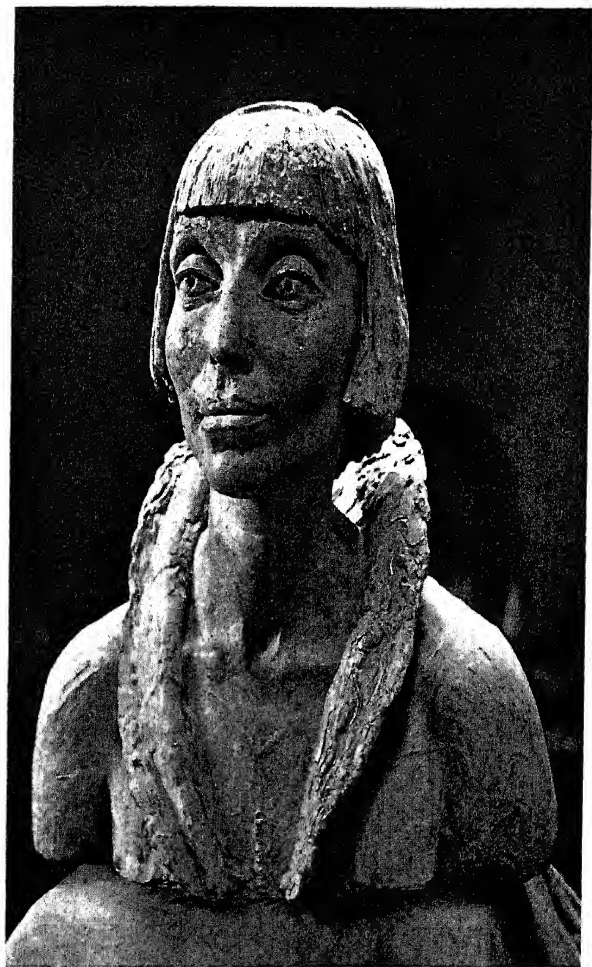
more vividly still, Lancret and Pater show the essence of the France of their time, while Watteau, who was a contemporary, goes far beyond that, in spite of his choice of subject.

A. L. H. But it is an easy matter to place an artist's date and nationality with a fair degree of accuracy.

EPSTEIN. That does not in any way go contrary to what I have just said. That is all a matter of habit. We do this through a process of elimination, through a recognition of certain purely technical features, and especially through the subject matter, the costume, the manner of hair-dressing and such details. This merely means that the painter was expressing himself with the means available to him at his particular time, in his particular country, and nothing more.

A. L. H. What about the Italian of the Trecento, whom we have just been discussing? Wouldn't you call him typical of his country and his time?

EPSTEIN: Perhaps, but only superficially. Your example gives me the opportunity of dismissing the nationality question entirely. It is a pure fallacy. The Italian Primitive was expressing something in common with the painters of France, Germany, Holland and Flanders of slightly later date, and that something—religion—was the main preoccupation of the time, and to that extent he was the true ex-



A PORTRAIT
(At the National Gallery, Millbank)
(1928)

PERIOD AND NATIONALITY

pression of his time. Perhaps then it would be better to say that the great artist may express something that is of predominant interest in his own time, but that is true at all time. He goes right down to the very depth of things, while the small master gives things their surface value alone and therefore only expresses his time. Whistler is an admirable example of an artist who expresses one period, while Beardsley, more restricted still, expresses one 'clique' in one period. I said "*may* express something of predominant interest in his own time" because that is by no means always true. Would you say that Modigliani, Rouault, Picasso or Matisse express their time? They are all exceedingly individualistic.

A. L. H. (Looking round the room at the many works) Certainly your work is not the expression of any one time. That head of Elsa Lanchester, for instance, would have been at home in the Renaissance, and Donatello would have understood and appreciated those putti.

EPSTEIN. In sculpture these statements are even less true than in painting. For sculpture is by no means as thoroughly understood and explored. A sculptor limited to period and nationality in the manner of some of the artists I have just mentioned would be intolerable. One appraises very lightly the conversation piece in sculpture. In many ways

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the painter is far freer in the things he can express. He can indulge, as Longhi, in depicting a *scène de mœurs*, or, like Forain, he can apply his magnificent draughtsmanship to a kind of super-journalism. The sculptor cannot do these things. The drawing is often a spontaneous thing of the moment, and I am not saying anything disparaging here, for masterpieces have been produced in that way, while the sculptor's work is the result of long premeditation. Anything light, jocular or of temporary effect in sculpture would inevitably fall very flat. I do not say that humour cannot have a place in sculpture, but it must be humour that is universal, not limited by time and place. Painting has been explored in every direction, while the general trend of European sculpture has not greatly varied since Donatello's day.

A. L. H. It is perhaps the very permanence of the material of sculpture that makes the indifferent work so intolerable. I can enjoy a second-rate picture, while realising that it is second-rate, but only great sculpture really gives me pleasure. Moore once said to me that that is because a picture hung on the wall immediately becomes part of the room, taking to it something of its surroundings, while a piece of sculpture stands apart and maintains its independence, creating numberless pictures according to the light and the position from which we view it.

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PERIOD AND NATIONALITY

[Epstein has just unpacked a large case full of his bronzes. There are many works that I have not yet seen, some that have never been exhibited. There is a remarkable self-portrait, bearded, with the expression of an apostle; not the Epstein that I know to-day. The Marchesa Casati stares at the Duchess of Marlborough; a magnificent negress, a jungle queen, stands side by side with a bobbed-haired, cheeky product of modern Harlem, while the Greek mask of the lovely Meum looks down, aloof. On the mantelpiece there is a bust of a beautiful Greek girl (I call her Greek, but actually she was an English servant girl) done over twenty years ago. It is very taut and restricted compared with the later work, almost a perfect example of academic art at its very best. The hair is treated according to sculptural convention in marked contrast to the later work. It illustrates better than anything the artist's progress, both in thought and technique.]

A. L. H. We have now been discussing this work for some time. I notice that I, like all the people who come here, talk of these busts as if they were human beings, taking their sculptural qualities rather for granted. Isn't this the wrong way of thinking? Shouldn't we ignore the personality of the sitter, and think only of what you have created?

EPSTEIN. Not at all. On the contrary, I find it flattering. After all I was vitally interested in the

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personality of my sitters. I have tried to express that interest in my work, and have evidently been able to communicate it to you. You are quite right in discussing these works as if they were human beings. There are three people who go to the making of works such as these, which express not abstract ideas, but actual people who exist; the model, the artist and the spectator. Something very definitely passes between artist and model. It is always evident in a work when the artist has been bored or irritated with his model. It has happened in my experience more than once that some remark of my model has put me out of humour to such an extent that I have been unable to continue. I can remember once during the war a well-known K.C., who was sitting to me, expressing the view that a woman who had given some bread-crumbs to the birds merited a severe term of imprisonment. The minute he had said that I saw him in quite a new light, as unsympathetic and utterly cruel, ridiculous and no longer dignified, and I was unable to continue the work. The artist is not a machine, and while he renders what he sees and not what he imagines his sitters to be like, an unfortunate remark can upset the whole atmosphere of creation. Unfortunately many people, as you know, when they discuss works, try to be too clever, to read into the expression hidden traits of character that only exist in their



ELSA LANCHESTER
(1924)

ARTIST AND MODEL

imagination. The jaundiced man will see yellow everywhere; and then, people always like to discover bad things in their friends. You will remember the mother of a young man whose portrait I did saying, "You haven't shown the baby in him." She felt something that simply couldn't exist outside her own imagination. My portrait showed her vividly that he was grown-up, and she rather resented it. These are the dangers that come from the unintelligent discussion of works of art in that manner.

A. L. H. What you have just said raises some interesting points. The personality of the sitter must always play a great part. You consider that your bust of Mrs. X is one of your finest works. I can see and appreciate that with my brain, but I would not care to possess it, and live with that particular work as much as with some others. There is something displeasing to me about the woman as you have shown her, although I know nothing about her, while the beauty of May, whom some would call an ugly woman, I find endless. She is truly a bird of paradise, as Mrs. Epstein calls her. At the press view of your exhibition I was much amused when Brodzky taxed the critics with viewing all women's portraits as potential mistresses.

EPSTEIN. Undoubtedly people do that. They go altogether too far. I said just now that the sculptor translated his experiences before a model

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to the spectator, and I spoke of sympathy and interest, but I did not mean for a moment that the artist fell in love with his model, physically, in the accepted sense of the word. The artist can fall in love with a line, a curve or a colour. I feel sure that Brancusi is in love with the oval. Renoir expressed the whole thing admirably when he asked his wife to choose cooks whose skin retained the light. He was never in love with his models, but in another sense he may have been and certainly was attracted purely as an artist with a certain type of flesh. Renoir as you know always used his cooks as models. Rodin once said: "It is extraordinary how I can always get better onion soup at Renoir's than at home, though my own cook is a real one and Renoir's a model." Sculpture is definitely a sensual art, and the sensual feeling cannot and should not be dissociated from its appreciation. There is, however, a world of difference between the phrase, "falling in love," when used artistically or ordinarily, though psychologists will show that the two are related.

A. L. H. What you have been saying about the relation between the model, the artist and the beholder again brings up the whole question of the critic's position. I can see no special category for him, except as a professional spectator. In an ideal world where everyone understood art he would be

THE FUNCTION OF THE CRITIC

totally unnecessary.

EPSTEIN. There is a feature in one of the papers just now, where the standard works of the world are retold in short-story form with suitable commentary to people who are too busy or too lazy to read them in their original form. The critic is in the position of the re-teller of these stories. He saves the time of the busy person by telling him his own sensation as the third party, the beholder, in the combination I was talking about. He is a "professional beholder." Where the man in the street may say, "I like this work, I find it original," the professional will tell him that such work has been known for numberless years and was originated by "X" in 1903, and that this present effort is but a pale imitation. If he is an honest man he can be exceedingly useful in such a capacity, but he must be honest with himself. He must realise that he is like any spectator; the third party in this artistic experience and not some rare new element.

A. L. H. The most illuminating criticism is that which does not try to explain what the artist has been doing, but follows a line of thought parallel to the artist. The following lines by André Salmon have always seemed to me the most admirable art criticism. They make Renoir far clearer, or rather render him far greater justice, for he is never obscure, than many volumes on his aims or on the

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

composition of his particular palette which are immediately obvious to any sensitive student of his work.

“Cagnes,

Cône tronqué flanqué d'un château de Cocagne,
Ses cubes d'ocre rose mesures au soleil mûries
Sur la colline avec sa tour au-dessus de la route de
la mer

Comme dans les paysages d'Ombrie,
Un aloès l'enveloppe de ses langues amères;
Renoir au jardin de roses devant la femme nue,
Paralytique,
Son pinceau noué où bat le pouls,
Au centre du foyer solaire épanoui en portique
Regardant au-delà de l'avenue
Où le modèle aux lèvres fortes sourit, debout,
Renoir peint des roses aux fesses dures et des
femmes aromatiques.”*

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* *Peindre*, by André Salmon.



MIRIAM
(1923)

CHAPTER NINE

PAST AND PRESENT

MICHAEL ANGELO AND DONATELLO—RODIN—BRANCUSI—MODIGLIANI—MAILLOL—GAUDIER—BRZESKA—
HENRY MOORE

[Jacob Epstein is an extraordinarily keen critic both of painting and sculpture with a very wide knowledge and a Catholic taste that allows him to enjoy the best of every period and to find beauty in the most unexpected places. It was he who first pointed out to me the beauties of a recumbent nymph by Canova in the Victoria and Albert Museum; "a work that Ingres would have loved."

Our conversations have covered nearly every phase of art. Epstein is never dogmatic, and is well able to appreciate the other man's point of view. When he rails against Academism he is always careful to underline exactly what he means.

"It is just a handy term to include a certain type of artist; like all terms of this kind it is rather vague, but you know what I mean. Many admirable artists have been academicians. I admit the *raison d'être*

THE SCULPTOR SPEAKS

of the artist with no very great originality or intellectual powers who displays high technical ability. In dull periods he does the valuable work of maintaining the technical standards. He can be an admirable teacher and to a certain degree a sound inspiration. Out of him may come many great creative artists. There are examples of this."

Insincerity or anything created to please the public in the first place and not the artist alone, he cannot forgive.

We have discussed all his contemporaries, but few of these conversations have survived Epstein's rigorous censorship.

"It's no use filling pages with criticisms of the artists I don't admire, though it is far easier to do such a negative thing. My enthusiasms are so much stronger than my dislikes even though the subjects may be fewer. There are so many artists nowadays."

It is to be regretted that I am not allowed to include some of the more biting phrases, such as the extremely apt adaptation of a famous quotation in the description of the works of a certain artist as being "stale, flat and unprofitable."]

A. L. H. When I visit Italy it has always been to see Donatello rather than Michael Angelo. Where Michael Angelo's perfection has inspired me with awe, I have felt a really intense joy in front of the works of Donatello. Indeed, it was my study of

MICHAEL ANGELO

him that led me logically to your work. People have been so busy searching for some exotic influence in your sculpture that they have all missed your unmistakable kinship with Donatello. He was the first to leave idealisation and to see beauty in character. He found true beauty in what others might call ugliness: in the old and withered Magdalene or the tragic Zuccone. He first discovered the real child, the child that you have shown so wonderfully in Joan Greenwood and in the many studies of Peggy Jean.

EPSTEIN. Michael Angelo makes not the slightest concession to the spectator. He is introspective, a mystic, entirely remote, creating an ideal world of his own. He is interested in the universal form and in his pursuit of that eliminates all personal and individual characteristics. He studies the individual in order to produce a type. Even his portraits of the Grand Dukes, for instance, are generic. In his "David" he is occupied with the presentation of a large nude figure rather than with the portrayal of the biblical David. It is that attitude that must make Michael Angelo difficult to approach for any but the artist. In such a work as the Frescoes of the Sistine Chapel the grandeur of the conception is such that only a very careful study reveals the absolute perfection of detail and the tenderness of the work, a word that would not immediately occur to one in

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thinking of Michael Angelo. Accident, too, purely extraneous happenings, have made him especially difficult to study. Scarcely one of his works is placed as he conceived it. The episode that prevented the completion of the Laurentian Chapel is one of the greatest tragedies of history. Night and Day are crowded, unhappy, on their pedestal.

A. L. H. How full of meaning is Strozzi's verse to the Night! That is surely the ideal manner in which to write of a great work. A volume could not express more.

"The Night that here thou seest in graceful guise
Thus sleeping, by an Angel's hand was carved
In this pure stone; but sleeping still she lives.
Wake her if thou doubttest and she'll speak."

EPSTEIN. And Michael Angelo's reply in the name of Night:

"Happy am I to sleep and still more blest
To be of stone, while grief and shame endure;
To see, nor feel, is now my utmost hope,
Wherefore speak softly and awake me not."

It is only to-day that we are beginning to understand Michael Angelo. His influence was so overpowering as to be fatal to his contemporaries and their followers. A genius such as Michael Angelo is disastrous to the art of his country for many generations. Michael Angelo expressed movement and violent action but with calm and serenity. His

MICHAEL ANGELO

ideal was potential power and movement, which his followers misunderstood and translated into restlessness and over-muscled gesture.

Donatello is the true father of modern European sculpture. For the first time he introduces a very personal element that is especially noticeable in the Akhnaton period of Egyptian art. He is interested in the psychology of the individual rather than in the creation of the idealised type. One can feel that his many portraits must have been admirable likenesses. There is a story that after having completed his Crucifixion, he was bitterly disappointed on seeing Brunelleschi's. "His is the Christ while I have made a peasant." Whether that is true or legendary it explains much of Donatello's vision. His interest lay in the life that went on around him. Where De La Robbia sentimentalised the child, Donatello saw the child's awkward walk. He is essentially a realist in outlook and naturally something very much more. His Magdalene, a direct opposite to the Greek ideal, appeared to him as beautiful because he knew that she was real. Where Michael Angelo was a philosopher Donatello was more of an intuitive artist. To follow Donatello was safe, for the study of humanity allows of infinite variation and endless possibilities. It is inexhaustible. He not only influenced Michael Angelo himself, but left a school of highly sensitive artists.

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A. L. H. You have told me that the Baroque does not interest you, obviously the extreme reactions against it such as Canova and Thorvaldsen do not, in spite of Canova's exquisite little nude that you have taught me to admire in the Victoria and Albert Museum. When is the next point that interests you?

EPSTEIN. Rodin. I do not for a moment say that there have not been great sculptors between the Renaissance and modern times, only they do not happen to interest or to move me greatly. Houdon is greatly admired, especially by Rodin, but I have never felt a real inclination to study his work. I am speaking to you here only of my personal tastes which I am not seeking to impose on anyone. There are many artists in that interval who have reached a very high degree of technical excellence, and as an artist I have been interested in and have admired that technique, but the work itself has left me unmoved. I have often told you that I find that one of the most important elements that can be present in the appreciation of a work of art is the element of "shock," in the sense of surprise. Greek art gives me that, Michael Angelo and Donatello do and so does Rodin.

Rodin is without dispute the greatest master of modern times. No change of fashion can possibly alter his position, though he has to a lesser degree



PUTTI
(1921)

RODIN

suffered from much the same type of malicious "secretarial gossip" as Anatole France, the penalty of great fame in Latin countries. In England, as you have said, the minute a man becomes an institution we deify him. Many of the remarks that he (Rodin) made without any serious intention have been used against him, but nearly all the anecdotes that have been told against him are untrue. We can find the real man in his works. His vast work remains, and it is more certainly not the work of a man whose chief preoccupation was, as many have made out, with satisfying the demands of the dealers, though he seems to have been a shrewd business man, a thing that is not easily forgiven in an artist. Rodin to-day is suffering from too great a popularity in the past, the inevitable reaction that blinds people to his true stature. Of his work I will not and I cannot say much. It is there for all to see and it requires no explanation. His artistic output was so considerable and he worked in so many different directions; influenced at one period by Greek ideals, at another by Michael Angelo, one time an impressionist, later a strong admirer of Egyptian art, which he finally preferred to the Greek, that it is like judging the work of many different sculptors. His work differs so greatly at various periods of his life, so much so in fact that at the extremes he could be accused of two totally different

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and conflicting things, without any true foundation of course, in *L'Age d'Airain* of working from casts, and in the *Balzac* of departing too far from nature. The *Balzac*, rejected by those who had commissioned it in favour of a competent but unimportant work by Falguière, is the peak of his work, a portrait and at the same time a symbol of the creator of the *Comédie Humaine*. Rodin was a deep thinker in artistic matters and the non-realisation of his grandiose scheme for the Porte d'Enfer, which has left us so many works, was greatly to be regretted. His famous *Penseur* appeals to me less, though its conception—the dawn of thought—is a powerful one. Also *The Burghers of Calais* seems to me not entirely successful as a group, though individually they are interesting. Here again ill-chance has played a part, for placed as he wished them on the town hall steps they would have made a unique impression. Very definitely the least interesting period is that of the marbles, such as *Le Baiser*, when he comes very much under the influence of Carrière. Leonardo has said that it is safe for painting to approach sculpture, but never safe for sculpture to approach painting, and impressionism in the round in a weighty material is an error, resulting in a Medardo Rosso, an interesting and highly competent artist following a false path. While Rodin never carries this to such

RODIN

extremes, his soft melting lines are more suitable to paint. The rather morbid, misty atmosphere that is a fault in Carrière's painting is a greater fault still in sculpture.

A. L. H. Rodin like Michael Angelo has had such an overpowering effect that I can see few sculptors, especially in France, untouched by his influence, from Bourdelle who tried to capture his bigness, to the gentle Despiau who has understood him at his most serene. Maillol has had to fly to the opposite, almost in self-protection.

EPSTEIN. There is Brancusi. Of contemporary sculptors Brancusi has had an enormous influence not merely on art, but on commercial crafts as well. Certain of his ideas have been translated into an elegant formula. His vision is intensely personal so that he is difficult to follow successfully.

A. L. H. The names he gives his work always seem confusing to me—*Bird in Flight*, for instance, a name that immediately conveys something very definite to the spectator so that he is prejudiced at once in his judgment of the work, which is an abstraction.

EPSTEIN. That is merely a question of cataloguing. *Opus X* or *Study* would be even more confusing, for the works are not entirely abstractions. The title really contains a hint. A cumbersome but more accurate title would be *The Essence of a Bird in*

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Flight as conceived by Brancusi. The sculptor has concentrated on the idea of flight. He has not tried to depict a bird, but the feeling of a flying bird or in another case of swimming fishes. He is a sculptor of movement, and his figures are simplified so as to give that sensation. Such simplification is not a new thing in art. During the trial in New York, in which I was called in as an expert witness, I showed an Egyptian hawk that was simplified so as to give the essence of the bird. The Judge and the Attorney were looking, as do most of the public, for something that the artist had never intended, the actual portrait of a bird. When the artist's intentions are realised the work itself is easier to understand. It may be approved or disapproved, but that is another question. Apart from its meaning it has a beauty of design that only an artist could have conceived.

Maillol, whom you have just mentioned, is one of the greatest influences in present day sculpture. He himself is a product of the thought that produced Renoir, and later Gauguin, together with a study of and a natural affinity to Greek art, especially the art of the terra cotta. His work reacts from all drama and emotion. The sculptor is mainly interested by æsthetic preoccupations. With such a stern æsthetic it is not always possible to produce interesting work. It is a question of extremes. At his best Maillol has produced really great work, while at his ordinary



DR. CRAMER
(1931)

BRANCUSI AND MAILLOL

level I personally find him dull and uninteresting. The tags of art cliques and art clichés themselves what people are fond of calling "pure sculpture," can be allied with human interest. Donatello has done it. I am not making this remark à propos of Maillol himself. He is a sincere artist working in the manner in which he feels and can best express himself. I object to the school of thought that has become attached to his work and that assumes the totally unnecessary function of attempting to explain his work. All good sculpture is "pure sculpture." Rude's *Marseillaise* about which we have just been speaking is pure sculpture, in spite of the meaning behind it. Donatello's *Magdalene* is pure sculpture. The human and psychological factors may and certainly do enhance the interest of this work, but it is artistically justified quite apart from that, taken purely from an abstract point of view. The followers and admirers of Maillol's work have tried to label it according to a formula of their own in a manner that does neither justice to Maillol himself, who is an artist first and last and not a theorist, nor shows any knowledge of sculpture. This has resulted in a group of artists, devoid of the slightest talent, who imitate his work in the name of "pure sculpture."

Much of this so-called "pure form" is taken as an end in itself, when in reality it should only be one stage in an artist's development, a stage that should

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bring him a step nearer to a fresh interpretation of nature. Many of the pictures and much of the sculpture of this kind, that we see to-day, are interesting not in themselves as finished works of art, but as laboratory work. In many cases the artist would do well to keep them to himself. They would be a useful point of departure, but to remain there, however much such works may be praised by a clique, however much, and wrongly so, they may be imagining that they are following the æsthetic of Maillol, constitutes a very barren proceeding. I have known Maillol's work since I was a boy and have admired it long before he was adopted by the professors in England.

In France there are many artists whose chief fame has been made as painters and who have produced some very fine pieces of sculpture, either directly or under their direction and supervision as in the case of Renoir, whose *Venus* is an important work. This seems astonishing to us at the present day, and speaking economically perhaps it is, but all the great figures of the Italian Renaissance were painter-sculptors. I do not think a knowledge of painting is an aid to the sculptor, but a knowledge of modelling is certainly a very great help to the painter, a fact realised by Daumier amongst others, and especially by Degas, the greatest of all modern sculptor painters, who has left many works, used

DEGAS

chiefly as models for his drawings, which have since been cast in bronze and commercialised. They are exceedingly brilliant, and although he would never have thought of himself as a sculptor, they entitle him to a very high position. His dancers are very much more vital than the much over-rated figures of Carpeaux who has idealised all the character away till little remains except a rather superficial grace, cloying in sweetness, in their setting at the Opera. In his brilliantly vivid realism Degas gives an entirely fresh and vital conception of beauty; the beauty of truth and character. As you know, nothing can be more banal and further from reality than the conventional study and painting of the dancer. The dancer herself is already a work of plastic art, and an idealised or superficially naturalistic version will give us far less than the dancer can give us herself. Degas rendered the very essence of the dancer.

Modigliani is another case of the modern sculptor-painter. At one period, he produced some exceedingly interesting carvings with curiously elongated faces and thin, razor-like noses that would often break off and have to be stuck on again. He would buy a block of ordinary stone for a few francs from a mason engaged on a building and wheel it back to his studio in a barrow. He was influenced by Negro art but in no way dominated by

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it. He had a vision entirely his own and people are wrong when they call his work imitative. It is, of course, as a painter that he is known, but he would also have excelled as a sculptor. Many of his drawings are entirely sculptural in conception and design.

Gaudier-Brzeska is another interesting figure, though not of the stature of the artists we have just mentioned. Lately he has become a legend and when that happens, although a man's work may increase in value from the sales-room point of view, its artistic importance is apt to be mis-stated. Just as Van Gogh is immortalised as the mad artist, who cut off his ear, and Gauguin as the stockbroker who left wife and family for Tahiti, so is Gaudier beginning to be celebrated as the hero of an extraordinary romance, and known to thousands who have never seen his drawing or a piece of his sculpture. I would not compare him as an artist either with Van Gogh or Gauguin, but the parallel of the legend exists. Gaudier did some very remarkable work in the short time allowed him, and would certainly have achieved something really big if he had not been killed. A great part of his life was spent in finding himself artistically, and he was greatly influenced by all he saw, Chinese art in particular. He took to carving after admiring a work he saw in my studio one day and did some of



JOAN GREENWOOD
(1930)

GAUDIER-BRZESKA

his finest work in that medium. I knew him very well; the legend that has been created round him is a distorted one that does not show the man well. Much of his petty malice was assumed to please Sophie Brzeska who was intensely and morbidly jealous of all his friends, and as the legend has been built up from her diary and his letters to her, written specially to please her, it presents a thoroughly distorted view which will now probably cling to him whenever his work is mentioned. Many of his drawings were especially fine, though in a manner more familiar to France.

A. L. H. All the sculptors you mention are foreigners. What of English sculpture?

EPSTEIN. Sculpture in England is without imagination or direction. Academic sculpture is not as it pretends to be in the Greek ideal. It is outside tradition altogether. There is far more in Greek sculpture besides an idealisation of the human body. When I look at sculpture one of my first demands is a feeling of surprise. This will need careful explanation. 'Shock' in the right sense is an excellent thing, as distinct from 'épatisme.' A work of art should give one a definite experience if there is thought behind it. All great work produces a shock, and sets the imagination working, even when the work itself is serene. The word 'shock' is perhaps an unfortunate one since it is closely linked

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with 'shocking' which conveys a meaning of obscenity, far removed from what I wish to convey. A vital work must shake the spectator out of a state of complacency and produce something more than the easy and meaningless words "beautiful" or "lovely" that are so simple a qualification for the obvious.

Henry Moore is the one important figure in contemporary English sculpture. If sculpture is truly the relation of masses then here is an example for all to see. Henry Moore by his integrity to the central idea of sculpture calls all sculptors to his side. What is so clearly expressed is a vision rich in sculptural invention, avoiding the banalities of abstraction and concentrating upon those enduring elements that constitute great sculpture.

It would be quite beside the point in his case to refer to "lovely materials" or "respectful craftsmanship." There is so much talk now of material that I can foresee as a logical conclusion an exhibition of stones. Forces from within these works project upon our minds what the sculptor wishes to convey. Bound by the severest æsthetic considerations, this sculpture is yet filled with the spirit of research and experiment. It contains the austere logic of ancient sculpture. Here is a sculptor who could produce monumental work, and allied to an architecture worthy of its powers the result would be an

HENRY MOORE

achievement to look forward to. Even the smallest works of Moore have an impressive and remote grandeur. His *Mother and Child* towers as high as a mountain. This attests the mental height of the sculptor, as in his flying figure on the New Underground Building, the will—the spirit has a velocity beyond the confines of the small space at the disposal of the artist. Moore has that quality that can startle the unthinking out of their complacency and for the future of sculpture in England he is vitally important.

In his recent exhibition he established himself as an artist to be reckoned with, but he was not fully understood, as again the critics and the public were looking for something that the artist did not wish to express, and they criticised his work either as symbolical or realistic in intention.

CHAPTER TEN

CHARACTERISTICS OF GREAT ART—TRADITION— AN INTRODUCTION TO THE APPRECIATION OF ART

(SUNDAY. It is boiling hot and few people have arrived. We are in the studio, one of the few cool spots in London to-day. Epstein shows me his unfinished study of Lydia, a Lydia with short hair this time. "I have just been going over the MS of our conversations. I find that we have not theorised over-much or laid down too many hard-and-fast rules. When one is writing, just a few are apt to creep in here and there. I am glad. I was only thinking when my model posed for me yesterday how free from all artistic theories I felt. I had no pre-conceived idea. I was just interested in the model and studied her. The method of treatment came easily out of my study. That is the right method. Artists have no time for theory."

I have seen him working at the vast Sun-God, goggled to protect his eyes from the flying chips.

"I work fast but I like to work a long time. Some things I will put away for a year or more and come back to them. *The Sun God* which you have



DAISY DUNN
(1927)

CHARACTERISTICS OF GREAT ART

seen me working at to-day has been put away for over twenty years. That is a test of work. If it will not stand it, it had better be destroyed. Some work of course must be carried through rapidly while the particular mood lasts. It is impossible to make any rule. My head of Paul Robeson and *La Bohémienne* were both executed rapidly in a few sittings."

A woman journalist dropped in this afternoon, and has asked Epstein what he thinks of the Male Dress Reform Movement and what is his ideal male costume. She is very surprised indeed when she hears that he has no views at all upon the subject and favours the accepted dress. I quote this, though in itself it is not of any real interest, because it shows the popular opinion of Epstein, held in this case by a very intelligent woman, as a rebel against all accepted conventions. Knowing him as I do, I was perfectly sure of his answer beforehand. He objects most violently to the slightest crankiness.)

A. L. H. What is the dividing line between true art and "art pompier"? What single point is there in common between such opposites as an odalisque of Ingres and an odalisque of Rouault, a drawing by Raphael and a drawing by Rembrandt, or a Madonna by Cimabue and a Madonna by Leonardo?

EPSTEIN. That is a trap. You are merely asking me in a thinly disguised manner the old question,

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"What is art?" The question that no one can ever answer. How much easier to say what art is not. There are, however, certain fundamental points in common between your seemingly contradictory examples, points that all great works of art possess. They do not answer the question, What is Art? but at any rate they show a very vital part of the truth. To start with, all the works you mention are the products of an interesting mind with something very real to express. However much technique an artist has, nothing can make up for lack of individuality and originality of vision.

Then each of the works you mention is carried out in a technique suitable for the expression of the particular idea. Though the drawing of an Ingres is the very opposite of the drawing of a Rouault both are admirable because they are perfect servants of the artist's idea. A Rouault could not express himself with the drawing of an Ingres. There are no absolute standards in drawing for that very reason.

A. L. H. Delacroix says that in periods of decadence draughtsmanship is at its highest.

EPSTEIN. That is clearly intended as a dig at Ingres and we must not take it very seriously. In a decadent period the artist has very little to express. It is obvious that draughtsmanship is only good when it expresses something worth expressing. By the terms *worth expressing* I do not mean to imply



MIRIAM PLICHTE
(1921)

CHARACTERISTICS OF GREAT ART

any moral standards. I am not one of those who apply the footrule of orthodox morality to works of art. The deliberately didactic work of art, and I am only talking of plastic art here, is seldom a success. Actually the ethic and the æsthetic are very closely bound up. Rembrandt's Christ at Emmaus is the perfect example. Where the early Christian painting may have been deliberately didactic, and often fails, the painting by Rembrandt succeeds as a spontaneous spiritual achievement.

But to return to your original examples. The next point the artists of these pictures have in common is their sincerity. They are painting to please themselves. In a period of decadence the artist may be acting with apparent sincerity, in that he has not got one eye on the dealers the whole time, but he has very little to say, and must spread that little over a number of works. While his first efforts may be sincere attempts at creation, his later works are imitations and elaborations. The academic artist copying Greek art, without the Greek mind, is insincere. The Society painter is obviously insincere, it pays him to be so. I am not sneering here at sound academic art. Although he was no pioneer and had little to say there is always room for such an artist as Mottez.* A far more dangerous form of insincerity, because it deceives

*The friend and disciple of Ingres.

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more people, and is closely bound up with commercialism, is the insincerity of the modern who follows some great painter such as Matisse or Picasso and turns out factory-made pictures for the unenlightened collector.

A. L. H. There has been a recent case of a nonentity trying to steal a little notoriety with a piece of carpentry labelled with a name very like the *Genesis*.

EPSTEIN. In the works of such men as Brancusi or Picasso, even when they are difficult to understand, the sincerity is evident. The work finds its logical place in the sequence of their artistic development. The spectator often finds it obscure because he has not followed this development, it is a missing link in his experience. For this reason he will either dismiss it as insincere rubbish, or will be deceived by the imitations, because they are "à la mode." At no time has there ever been such a flood of bad art, turned out by artists, to meet the demands of the dealers. Sincerity in art may be sneered at by some, but it is an all-important point.

Finally in each of your examples the artist has completed what he set out to do, neither going beyond it nor falling short of it. Michael Angelo expressed that in his retort to the Pope, who was worrying him in the manner that art patrons continually do.



PAUL ROBESON
(1927)

THE VALUE OF TRADITION

"It will be finished when I have done all that I believe required to satisfy art."

You will remember how, when some alterations to the nose of a statue were suggested, Michael Angelo climbed up the scaffolding, chisel in hand, pretending to make the alteration by dropping some fragments of stone on the floor. His patron was satisfied, but Michael Angelo knew when he had really finished the work.]

The commonest fault of the academic artist is to push a work too far by concentrating on the over-elaboration of some totally irrelevant detail. How often is a portrait that might be pleasing, if left as a sketch, entirely ruined by the painting say of a feathered fan which carries the eye away from the subject and throws out the whole composition. The uninitiated will condemn it by the first words of praise they utter. "How wonderfully that fan is painted. It is almost real." But the artist will have altered his painting from a "portrait of Mrs. X" to "portrait of a fan held by Mrs. X." In a Canova nude the couch is as important as the figure.

Donatello made great use of ornament, but such tactful use that it always enhanced his composition and served his idea.

* * * *

A. L. H. How would you advise the amateur to

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gain a knowledge of art through study in the museums?

EPSTEIN. Those few points that I have just mentioned as distinguishing a good work from bad would make a useful point of departure, though even they need considerable elaboration and a certain experience before they can be applied. My first piece of advice to the amateur would be to go through a long period of probation, and to reserve all judgment, and then a thorough period of spring-cleaning. He must, even without knowing it, be a mass of prejudices. He must now learn to think in terms of art as a continuous unbroken whole and forget all that he has picked up about ancient art and modern art, British art and foreign art. You will remember that in a previous discussion we found that period and nationality were ultimately of no real importance, that great art could speak to all peoples at all times. That is the first great lesson. To understand that is to go far to a real understanding of art.

Then in this attitude of mind I would recommend the amateur to start from the earliest times and to work his way up to the renaissance, always reserving his judgment and especially forgetting that refuge of the weak-minded and the bigoted—the Philistine who is proud of it—"I may not know anything about art, but I do know what I like."

THE DEMETER RESTORATION

There can be no excuse, with all the opportunities for study available at the present day, for knowing nothing about art, and to express decided opinions while admitting complete ignorance is sheer impudence that would not be tolerated in any other subject—cricket for instance.

This careful chronological study will reveal to the amateur something of the trend of artistic thought. He will live and experience in a short time some little fragment of what inspired the artists. He will realise what has already been attempted and may be able to divine the why and wherefore. But what is still more important, he will be able to learn the meaning of tradition. No one has a greater respect for tradition, or for the great works of the past, than I have. I realise that no great work has ever been produced by flouting tradition. *The whole integrity of art lies in its traditions.* Tradition does not mean a surrender of originality. On the contrary all the great innovators in art were in the great tradition, you cannot quote one exception, however much they may have been considered rebels by their contemporaries.

Sometimes tradition skips a generation or two, lost by the academicians, the so-called keepers of tradition, only to be found again by a Cézanne, who is jealously and blindly kept out of the salon of Bougereau. As a so-called rebel I was the only

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person to protest against the disfigurement of ancient sculptures by the museum authorities, whose sole function is to safeguard tradition.

Copy of letter written to *The Times*, May 2nd, 1921 :

ANCIENT MARBLES

POLICY OF RESTORATION

To the Editor of *The Times*:

SIR,—All those who care for antique sculpture will view with astonishment and dismay the present policy followed by the British Museum authorities in restoring the marbles—that is, working them up with new plaster noses, etc.

I have remarked with growing alarm marble after marble so treated during the last year. I felt the futility of protesting, and so held my peace, but now that the incredible crime of “restoring” the head of the Demeter of Cnidus has at last been committed, the atrocity calls for immediate protest.

No doubt the Museum authorities do not like the Greek marbles in their possession, but why they should translate the masterpieces into something more nearly approaching the Albert Moore ideal of Greek passes my understanding. The Demeter is

PROGRESS AND TRADITION

not only "improved" with a new plaster nose, but to bring the rest of the head into consistency with this nose the whole face has been scraped and cleaned, thus destroying the mellow golden patine of centuries. Other important pieces "improved" are the marble boy extracting a thorn from his foot and the very fine priestess from Cnidus, so altered as to give an entirely different effect from that it originally had. How long are these vandals to have in their "care" the golden treasury of sculpture which at least they might leave untouched?

I remain, yours very respectfully,

JACOB EPSTEIN.

They evidently took my advice, for two years later I was able to write:

To the Editor of *The Times*, *February 21st, 1923.*

SIR,—It may be a matter of great satisfaction to those interested in sculpture to know that the British Museum authorities have seen fit to remove the "restorations" from the head of the Demeter against which *The Times* published a protest some two years ago. Unfortunately the scraping which the head underwent at the same time is not so easily remedied. Are we to hope that in the future works which it is not in our power to rival will be left untouched by the hand of the "restorer,"

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however ambitious and well-meaning he may be?

JACOB EPSTEIN.

23, Guilford St., *February 19th.*

When the amateur has studied the rich period of the Renaissance, culminating in such giants as Michael Angelo, Raphael and Leonardo, he will realise how tradition is temporarily lost through small minds, lacking in personality, attempting to copy the work of masters. *Tradition implies progress.* To stop still is to lose sight of it. He will then understand how a period suddenly comes to an end and why in this particular case original creative art leaves Italy for Holland and other countries. He will watch the same phenomenon there, until he arrives at the last vitally creative country, France. There perhaps he will see best of all the curious routes taken by tradition, with always the identical story, the rebel of to-day, hailed as the academic leader of to-morrow. Each great individual artist leaving behind him a group of anæmic followers, who exist side by side in the salons and academies of great cities, while their inspirers have become recognised by the masses as "old masters," and they share the reflected glory. But it is only the despised rebel, perhaps a generation after, who is the real follower and who turns to the master when inspiration has worn thin.

NATURALISM, REALISM AND FUTURISM

A. L. H. Ingres, himself a rebel, becomes the leader of academicians to give way in his turn to the romantic rebel Delacroix. Ingres leaves a host of official followers, but he is only understood later by a Degas or a Picasso. The same is the case with Delacroix. The academies of the world are full of historical subject painters who claim him as their master, but it is Cézanne who really understands him.

EPSTEIN. And Matthew Smith in this country. To-day Cézanne himself is the "chef d'académie." The galleries are full of his followers. To-morrow the full value of his gifts will be understood by some original artist, when all the books on him by the theorists have had time to be forgotten. It is the curious but always logical working of tradition.

A. L. H. It is also useful to realise that this is not confined to plastic arts alone. The amateur should have a little historical background for his studies, to understand that the romanticism of Delacroix has its parallel in Victor Hugo and the naturalism of Courbet in Zola.

EPSTEIN. Be careful. I am always a little frightened by the words "naturalism" or "realism." They are confusing. We must pause to think carefully. There is not only one form of realism. Truth has a variety of aspects. Nearly every artist is a realist in one particular sense of the word. The painter of the naturalistic school seeks to free

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himself from artificial subjects. Courbet did this, but to me he is a romantic. The naturalist of to-day is often the romantic of to-morrow. But the romantic too is a naturalist. You see how dangerous these labels can be? The impressionist also seeks naturalism in his study of the effects of atmosphere. The Futurist too is very certainly a naturalist in his intention to portray the effects of movement in art.

The whole subject is too vast for an afternoon's conversation, but out of it, even superficially as I have treated it, one lesson emerges and that is, *never be a slave to labels*. They are exceedingly useful if they are prudently handled, but the deeper one goes into the subject the falser they are, till finally they must be discarded altogether. Of that group of artists we label "impressionists," only one, Claude Monet, remained till the end true to this description.

I am discussing painting because for obvious reasons it is easier to find examples and easier to study in the museums. Appreciation of sculpture, as you have said, is something of an adventure. But these same principles always hold good. Rodin in a sense, but this is of course only a partial truth, is the first real pupil of Michael Angelo, misunderstood by others since his death.

A. L. H. And you too share a secret with Donatello.

EPSTEIN. Not a secret. The works of Dona-

NATURALISM, REALISM AND FUTURISM

tello have been on view since his death. The amateur then who approaches art in this spirit, and builds himself a framework into which he can fit every one of his artistic experiences, so that every visit to the museum will be "lived," has a right to express his own opinion. It may be wrong, but he can justify it instead of relying on hysterical praise or vulgar abuse, which is far more usual.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

AMERICA AND AMERICAN SCULPTURE TO-DAY

EPSTEIN. I returned to America in 1927 after very many years absence. The papers announced my intention of settling down there permanently, and evidently inspired by some misguided friends of mine, who resented the treatment I had received, they had headlines, EPSTEIN SHAKES THE DUST OF ENGLAND FROM HIS FEET. I had not, of course, the slightest intention of leaving England for ever, and in fact I only stayed in America for four months. But I have a great love for the country and was most interested in all that I saw in that short time.

A. L. H. America has taken a very definite position in present day literature. She has created a school of her own with something really American to express, and whatever we may say in England, a virile American language is growing daily. She is also a pioneer in the new architecture. Are there at present any signs of a real American sculpture?

EPSTEIN. There are many excellent American

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sculptors who compare on the whole more than favourably with our own—I will discuss some of them with you—but as yet I can see no school that can be classified as American in the sense of the writers or the architects you mentioned. One would naturally expect a much quicker development in literature. Literature is one of the first signs of a growing national consciousness, and the first of the arts to show strong national characteristics. Everyone who writes or speaks is playing his part in the development of literature. American architecture is dictated principally by economic necessity. There are no urgent reasons why a young country should produce characteristic sculpture, but I find that America has missed two great opportunities for expression in sculpture, opportunities where she might have taken a definite lead.

The first is in the alliance between architecture and sculpture. The American building is admirably suited for monumental sculpture on a heroic scale that need not in any way detract from its great impressiveness. Think, for instance, of the Temple of Karnak, the best known example of the alliance between architecture and sculpture. The most moving piece of architecture that I saw over there was the Bell Telephone building, but its beauty would have been greatly enhanced by the addition of sculpture, carried out, naturally, in the spirit of

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the building. The carving of a mountain-side may make an impressive memorial, if there are sculptors great enough to undertake such a thing, but there are many hundreds of buildings in the big cities of America to-day that call aloud and much more obviously for sculpture.

Public monuments in America are far worse than here. I see you don't credit that, but they easily surpass the Queen Victoria Memorial at Buckingham Palace, the Artillery Memorial at Hyde Park Corner, or the Albert Memorial. The Maine Memorial in Central Park passes belief.

There is a strange love of the exotic in America. An architect once showed me his plans for a state-house in Nebraska, I think it was. They were entirely Assyrian. He justified this by saying, "I think our civilization is closely allied to the Assyrian."

The other direction in which America has failed is in the portrayal of the many remarkable types that compose the American people. I am thinking of the negro in particular. I myself have probably undertaken more negro portraits than any sculptor in America, although there are few negroes in England. While America is favoured in these two particulars, she has not taken advantage of them, and where she might so easily predominate in the monumental and in the ethnographical portrait



LYDIA
(1930)

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she has a few excellent sculptors working in a purely European tradition.

There is also an opportunity in America for the influence of the Indians, the original inhabitants of the country, that has been neglected. The Civic centre in Denver, Colorado, is laid out with Greek Columns, but there are Indians all around, and constructions in adobe that could be developed into an interesting school. However fine the result might be, it is out of place, and must compare unfavourably with the originals in Greece, and it can never be an inspiration to the young American artist.

The negro, too, might have much to say in sculpture, just as he dominates certain forms of music. African art is no better known over there than here. The cultured negro is interested in it, but from the racial and historical point of view, and it is not the living force that it might well be in a country that has a population of so many million negroes. The Mexican school is the most genuinely creative on the American continent, just because it has grown naturally out of the atmosphere and traditions of the country.

To come to individuals; George Barnard is the most important American sculptor of the day. He is a very fine "school" man in the best sense of the word, with a definite imagination. His great work *Two Natures* makes a stupendous impression. He

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is well in advance of the majority of our English sculptors and that is probably why his proposed *Lincoln* was not accepted for Parliament Square. I was in fact its only defender, but naturally a sculptor's opinion would not be listened to. This is what I wrote in 1917:

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Daily Telegraph*.

SIR,—I read with astonishment the pontifical judgments of your art critic Sir Claude Phillips, upon the statue of Abraham Lincoln, by George Gray Barnard, the American sculptor, based solely upon what he admitted was a very blurred photograph; and he is equally astonishing to me when he is full of respect and solemnity towards his own suggestions of what a monument to Lincoln should be!

These two attitudes are by no means uncommon to critics. George Gray Barnard is a very great sculptor, an artist whose Lincoln should be awaited with the eager expectancy due to a new unknown work. What there may be behind this by no means accidental attack and Press campaign against his Lincoln statue I do not know, but undoubtedly Barnard, like all men of genius and independent mind, would have ready waiting for him the usual pack of malicious mediocrities, who would fasten upon him. I raise the only protest I know of against this chorus of calumny, because Barnard

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has given the world works for which we will always be grateful, and this attack upon his statue of Lincoln in England is manifestly unfair and one-sided.

I remain,

Very sincerely yours,

JACOB EPSTEIN.

October 6th, 1917.

23, Guilford Street, W.C. 1.

Barnard works in a Michael Angelesque manner. He far excels our own Alfred Stevens, and there is behind his work plenty of imagination.

St. Gauden's *Lincoln* that was chosen in place of Barnard's work is very able, better than the average public monument in England, but definitely lacking in imagination. He has not made the most of his remarkable subject; he might have shown us what Lincoln stood for, a symbol as well as a portrait, as Rodin has done in the *Balzac*, but the figure he has given is that of a capable and astute politician with not a hint of the rail-splitter or the rugged pioneer, while the chair is superfluous and completely out of the composition. St. Gauden's, nevertheless, represents academic tradition on a high level; his equestrian *Sherman* is over-detailed and fussy, but it has a certain movement.

One of the finest sculptors whose work I saw

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over there was Zorach, who specialises in direct carving.

Not one of these artists is in any sense American, however.

A. L. H. What would you say of American taste in general?

EPSTEIN. The cultured American is far too inclined to welcome an art which to him seems the very essence of sophistication and modernity, the attenuated products of abstraction, a phase that is now dying out in Europe. Brancusi, a great sculptor working with real individuality and entirely justified in his method, has attracted more imitators in the United States of America than any other living sculptor. In the art schools too I noticed a greater tendency towards abstraction than towards realism. It is certainly easier to produce rapid results that way, but it is a blind alley. In their quest for originality more and more American artists seek Paris and absorb the immediate and the obvious rather than what is truly great in the French tradition. America, her history and her people, should be enough to inspire generations of artists. I remember an artist called Benton, who wished to make a complete heroic panorama of American life and history. I do not know what he produced finally, but he was certainly proceeding in the right direction. Anæmia and not crudity is

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the danger to be feared in a nation that is young artistically.

There is another vogue in America that is leading her artists on a completely false track and that cannot possibly produce art, and that is the deplorable influence—it is in fact much more than an influence—of early Greek or the sweeter forms of Buddhist sculpture, “tea party Buddhism,” I have heard it called. That popular artist Paulanship is an extreme example of this.

You would be amazed at the curious imitations of romanesque to be seen in America. There is a church in New York that is a perfect and scholarly replica of the romanesque. I found it very interesting, but quite out of place in its surroundings. It is like our own pre-Raphaelite movement, a thing artificially introduced with no relation at all to actuality or to what has gone before it. The proposed cathedral in New York is already completely dwarfed by an apartment house, and loses any dignity that it may have possessed.

The West, where one would expect vigorous originality, is a bitter disappointment, just a repetition of the dullest work that we have over here.

A. L. H. Where would you go to study American sculpture to-day?

EPSTEIN. Where would you go over here to study English sculpture? There is no more a centre over

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there than there is here. The collection in the Metropolitan Museum is a mixture in no way representative of American sculpture. The American museums are in many respects admirable, but they have become too commercialised, and collecting for an American museum is a very lucrative profession, but the quality of the work often suffers as a consequence and the business man is rapidly replacing the man of taste and judgment.

A. L. H. But America is the country of big collectors. Do none of them understand the art they buy?

EPSTEIN. That might be said of collectors in every country everywhere. Most of them have been so busy making money that they run their collections like their businesses. They are incapable of thinking for themselves, and buy the brains of some critic, who usually ends up with a far better collection himself. The collector who is himself poor and who assists a group of artists when they are unpopular and rises with them, only seems to exist in France. The Impressionists would have starved without their few faithful friends, most of them literary men or small art dealers. There are the famous cases of the poor baker in Montmartre, and the colour merchant, Le Père Tanguy, who rose to wealth through backing their own artistic judgment. Scarcely any of the big collections can be

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called personal. The greatest attraction for collectors everywhere is the social prestige they gain. I remember once a collector in New York who showed me his collection, a truly magnificent one, and who told me with pride, "My taste stops after 1665."

MRS. EPSTEIN. There was some excuse for him. He was more or less blind, wasn't he?

EPSTEIN: Yes, but only after 1665.

It is a great pity that the Quinn collection was dispersed. The Metropolitan Museum had an admirable opportunity of acquiring it, but would not accept the condition laid down, that of taking it as it stood. It contained many admirable Picassos, Cézannes and Seurats and also very many examples of my work.*

When I sailed for America my reputation for truculence preceded me, and I was solemnly warned by one paper that "the reception of Mr. Jacob Epstein will depend on the attitude he adopts towards his fellow sculptors." I had many interesting sitters in America, amongst them Professor Boaz, Paul Robeson, and that great philosopher John Dewey. His bust was presented to the University by his students, and so great was his popularity that subscriptions were limited to five dollars. In one case 100 dollars subscription from a wealthy man was refused, and the amount could have been collected

+ The Venus, Mother and Child, The Doves, etc.

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in that way many times over. Half way through the sitting, Joseph Ratner, the pupil who had organized this presentation, would come in and make him a cup of coffee, and then they would discuss the most abstract philosophical theme till the end of the sitting.

A. L. H. What of the future of American art?

EPSTEIN. The greatest mistake that American artists can make in the future will be to look to Europe for direct inspiration. Paris is still undoubtedly the capital of the art world, but Paris generally turns out either French artists, who take up their homes in France and step straight into the tradition of French art, or poor imitations of French art. Paris will not produce American artists. Art, as I have already told you, must be international and not national to have real significance, but that does not rule out the question of national inspiration. It must take firm root in some inspiration. It must take firm root in some definite country. I have no sympathy for the artist who is constantly wandering from capital to capital. The American has much to learn from European art, both positive and negative lessons, but the period of learning must not be over-prolonged. The American should not be ashamed of the crude attempts of the young artist. They are worth more than all the Romanesque or Buddhist imitations. Each country must have its own genuine primitives.

APPENDIX ONE

AN ARTICLE BY THE LATE T. E. HULME

It is at Epstein's special request that I reprint T. E. Hulme's article from the *New Age* of December 25th, 1913.

EPSTEIN. Hulme was a great man. His death was a terrible loss. He was the one man who could have shown up all the nonsense that is being written about art at the present day. He was planning a work just about the time he was killed, very much on the same lines as the present book. Although written seventeen years ago this article is remarkably fresh and with the substitution of a name here and there might apply to the discussions that I have to face after all my exhibitions. I would like to see it reprinted once again as I always remember it as the sanest article written about me.

The illustration accompanying it was a study for the Rock Drill, which I afterwards expressed in sculpture. I was one of the first to study the possibilities of the abstract. To-day I am far more interested in a closer expression of humanity.

APPENDIX ONE

MR. EPSTEIN AND THE CRITICS

BY T. E. HULME

I BEGIN with an apology. All through this article I write about Mr. Epstein's work in a way which I recognise to be wrong, in that it is what an artist would call literary. The appreciation of a work of art must be plastic or nothing. But I defend myself in this way, that I am not so much writing directly about Mr. Epstein's work, as engaged in the more negative and quite justifiable business of attempting to protect the spectator from certain prejudices which are in themselves literary. This is an article then not so much on Epstein as on his critics. When I see the critics attempting to corrupt the mind of the spectator and trying to hinder their appreciation of a great artist, I feel an indignation which must be my excuse for these clumsy, hurriedly-written and unrevised notes.

An attack on critics could not have a better subject-matter than the Press notices on Mr. Epstein's show. They exhibit a range and variety of fatuousness seldom equalled. It is not necessary to spend any time over notices which, like that of "C.B." in the *Athenæum*, are merely spiteful, or that in the *Illustrated London News* which compared him

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unfavourably with the Exhibition of Humorous Artists. I propose rather to deal with those which, in appearance at any rate, profess to deal seriously with his work.

Take first the merely nervous. Their method is continually to refer to Mr. Epstein as a great artist and at the same time to deplore everything he does. It reminds one of the old philosophical disputes about substance. Would anything remain of a "thing" if all its qualities were taken away? What is the metaphysical nature of an artist's excellence that seems to manifest itself in no particular thing he does? The truth is, of course, that they dare not say what they really think. The particular kind of gift which enables a man to be an art critic is not the possession of an instinct which tells them what pictures are good or bad, but of a different kind of instinct which leads them to recognise the people who do know. This is, of course, in itself a comparatively rare instinct. Once they have obtained a "direction" in this way, their own literary capacity enables them to expand it to any desired length. You can, however, always tell this from a certain emptiness in their rhetoric (cf. Arthur Symons' article on Rodin). There is no one to give them a "direction" about Mr. Epstein's drawings, and they are at a loss. They seek refuge in praise of the *Romilly*, which has been universally

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admitted to be one of the finest bronzes since the Renaissance.

I come now to the most frequent and the most reasonable criticism: that directed against the "Carvings in Flenite." It is generally stated in a rather confused way, but I think it can be analysed out into two separate prejudices. The first is that an artist has no business to use formulæ taken from another civilisation. The second is that, even if the formula the artist uses is the natural means of expressing certain of his emotions, yet these emotions must be unnatural in him, a modern Western. I shall attempt to show that the first objection really has its root in the second, and that this second prejudice is one which runs through almost every activity at the present time. These "Carvings in Flenite," we are told, are "deliberate imitations of Easter Island carvings." This seems to me to depend on a misconception of the nature of formulæ. Man remaining constant, there are certain broad ways in which certain emotions must, and will always naturally be expressed, and these we must call formulæ. They constitute a constant and permanent alphabet. The thing to notice is that the use of these broad formulæ has nothing to do with the possession of or lack of individuality in the artist. That comes out in the way the formulæ are used. If I or the King of the Zulus want to walk,

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we both put one leg before the other; that is the universal formula, but there the resemblance ends. To take another illustration, which I don't want to put forward as literally true, but which I only use for purposes of illustration. A certain kind of *nostalgie* and attenuated melancholy is expressed in Watteau by a formula of tall trees and minute people, and a certain use of colour (I am also aware that he got this feeling, in the Gilles, for example, by a quite other formula, but I repeat I am only giving a sort of hypothetical illustration). It would be quite possible at the present day for a painter, wishing to express the same kind of emotion, to use the same broad formula quite naturally and without any imitation of Watteau. The point is, that given the same emotion, the same broad formula comes naturally to the hands of any people in any century. I may say that I have not, as a matter of fact, any great admiration for the particular painters who use this particular formula, but I am trying to give an illustration of a formula which the critics who attack Mr. Epstein would not have attacked. To be legitimate, of course, the formula used must be a natural expression of the feeling you are getting at and not a mere imitation of an exotic or a romantic past. The form follows the need in each case. It may quite easily be the same need divided by many civilisations.

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I think that in this way we can force these people back on to the real root of their objection, the second prejudice I mentioned, the feeling that it is unnatural for a modern to have the kind of emotion which these formulæ naturally express. In getting at this, one is getting at something that is really fundamental on modern life. I do think that there is a certain general state of mind which has lasted from the Renaissance till now, with what is, in reality, very little variation. It is impossible to characterise it here, but perhaps it is enough to say that, taking at first the form of the "humanities," it has in its degeneracy taken the form of a belief in "Progress" and the rest of it. It was in its way a fairly consistent system, but is probably at the present moment breaking up. In this state of break-up, I think that it is quite natural for individuals here and there to hold a philosophy and to be moved by emotions which would have been unnatural in the period itself. To illustrate big things by small ones I feel, myself, a repugnance towards the *Weltanschauung* (as distinct from the technical part) of all philosophy since the Renaissance. In comparison with what I can vaguely call the religious attitude, it seems to me to be trivial. I am moved by Byzantine mosaic, not because it is quaint or exotic, but because it expresses an attitude I agree with. But the fate of the people

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who hold these views is to be found incomprehensible by the "progressives" and to be labelled reactionary; that is, while we arrive at such a *Weltanschauung* quite naturally, we are thought to be imitating the past.

I have wandered into this by-path merely to find therein an illustration which will help us to understand the repugnance of the critic to the "Carvings in Flenite." It is, says the critic, "rude savagery, flouting respectable tradition—vague memories of dark ages as distant from modern feeling as the loves of the Martians." Modern feeling be damned! As if it were not the business of every honest man at the present moment to clean the world of these sloppy dregs of the Renaissance. This carving, by an extreme abstraction, by the selection of certain lines, gives an effect of tragic greatness. The important point about this is that the tragedy is of an order more intense than any conception of tragedy which could fit easily into the modern progressive conception of life. This, I think, is the real root of the objection to these statues, that they express emotions which are, as a matter of fact, entirely alien and unnatural to the critic. But that is a very different thing from their being unnatural to the artist. My justification of these statues would be then (1) that an alien formula is justifiable when it is the necessary expression of a certain attitude; and

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(2) that in the peculiar conditions in which we find ourselves, which are really the breaking up of an era, it has again become quite possible for people here and there to have the attitude expressed by these formulæ.

I have dealt with these in rather a literary way, because I think that in this case it is necessary to get semi-literary prejudices out of the way before the carvings can be seen as they should be seen, i.e., plastically.

To turn now to the drawings, which have been even more misunderstood by the critics than the carvings, I only want to make a few necessary notes about these, as I am dealing with them at greater length in an essay elsewhere. I need say very little about the magnificent drawing reproduced in this paper, for it stands slightly apart from the others and seems to have been found intelligible even by the critics. I might, perhaps, say something about the representative element in it—a man is working a Rock Drill mounted on a tripod, the lines of which, in the drawing, continue the lines of his legs. The two lines converging on the centre of the design are indications of a rocky landscape. It is the other drawings which seem to have caused the most bewildered criticism; they have been called prosaic representations of anatomical details, “medical drawings,” and so on. It is perfectly obvious that

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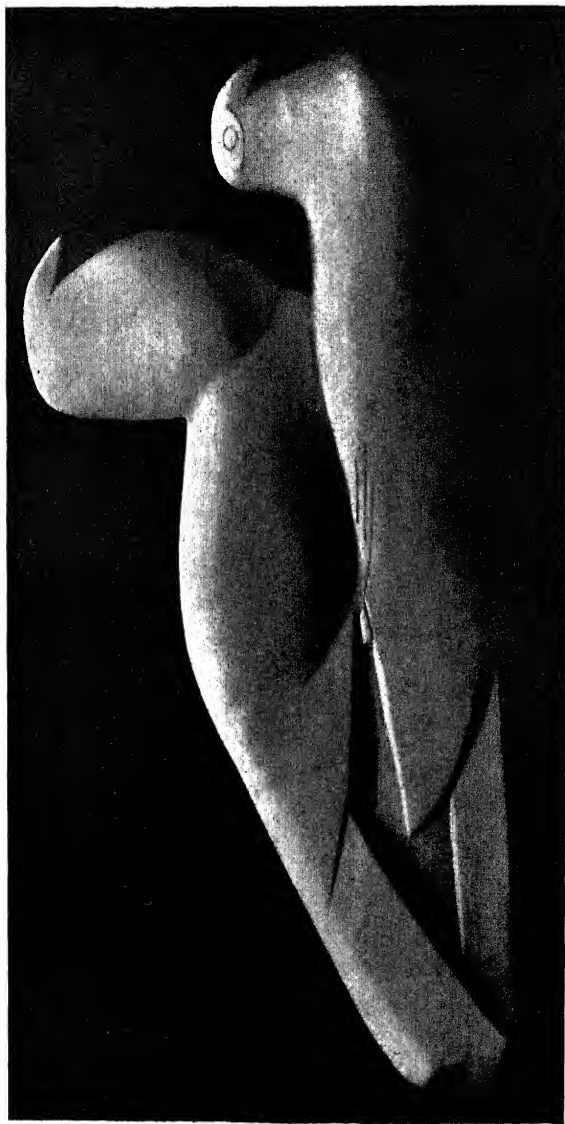
they are not that. What prevents them being understood as expressions of ideas is quite a simple matter. People will admire the "Rock Drill" because they have no preconceived notion as to how the thing expressed by it should be expressed. But with the other drawings concerned with birth the case is different. Take for example the drawing called "Creation," a baby seen inside many folds. I might very roughly say that this was a non-sentimental restatement of an idea, which, presented sentimentally and in the traditional manner, they would admire—an idea something akin to the "Christmas crib" idea. If a traditional symbol had been used they would have been quite prepared to admire it. They cannot understand that the genius and sincerity of an artist lie in extracting afresh, from outside reality, a new means of expression. It seems curious that the people who in poetry abominate clichés and know that Nature, as it were, presses in on the poet to be used as metaphor, cannot understand the same thing when it occurs plastically. They seem unable to understand that an artist who has something to say will continually "extract" from reality new methods of expression, and that these being personally felt will inevitably lack prettiness and will differ from traditional clichés. It must also be pointed out that the critics have probably themselves not been accustomed to

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think about generation, and so naturally find the drawings not understandable. I come now to the stupidest criticism of all, that of Mr. Ludovici. It would probably occur to anyone who read Mr. Ludovici's article that he was a charlatan, but I think it worth while confirming this impression by further evidence. His activities are not confined to art. I remember coming across his name some years ago as the author of a very comical little book on Nietzsche, which was sent me for review.

I shall devote some space to him here then, not because I consider him of the slightest importance, but because I consider it a duty, a very pleasant duty and one very much neglected in this country, to expose charlatans when one sees them. Apart from this general ground, the book on Nietzsche is worth considering, for it displays the same type of mind at work as in the article on art.

What, very briefly then, is the particular type of charlatan revealed in this book on Nietzsche? It gave one the impression of a little Cockney intellect which would have been more suitably employed indexing or in a lawyer's office, drawn by a curious kind of vanity into a region the realities of which must for ever remain incomprehensible to him. Mr. Ludovici, writing on Nietzsche, might be compared to a child of four in a theatre watching a tragedy based on adultery. The child would



THE DOVES
(Marble Carving)

APPENDIX ONE

observe certain external phenomena, but as to the real structure of the tragedy, its real moving forces, it would naturally be rather hazy. You picture then a spruce little mind that has crept into the complicated rafters of philosophy—you imagine him perplexed, confused—you would be quite wrong, the apperceptive system acts like a stencil, it blots out all the complexity which forms the reality of the subject, so that he is simply unaware of its existence. He sees only what is akin to his mind's manner of working, as dogs out for a walk only scent other dogs, and as a Red Indian in a great town for the first time sees only the horses. While thus in reality remaining entirely outside the subject, he can manage to produce a shoddy imitation which may pass here in England, where there is no organised criticism by experts, but which in other countries, less happily democratic in these matters, would at once have been characterised as a piece of fudge. I have only drawn attention to this in order to indicate the particular type of charlatan we have to deal with, so that you may know what to expect when you come to consider him as an art critic. I want to insist on the fact that you must expect to find a man dealing with a subject which is in reality alien to him, ignorant of the aims of the actors in that subject, and yet maintaining an appearance of adequate treatment with the help of a few tags.

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That a man should write stupid and childish things about Nietzsche does not perhaps matter very much; after all, we can read him for ourselves. But when a little bantam of this kind has the impertinence to refer to Mr. Epstein as a "minor personality—of no interest to him," then the matter becomes so disgusting that it has to be dealt with. The most appropriate means of dealing with him would be a little personal violence. By that method one removes a nuisance without drawing more attention to it than its insignificance deserves. But the unworthy sentiment of pity for the weak, which, in spite of Nietzsche, still moves us, prevents us dealing drastically with this rather light-weight superman. To deal definitely then with his criticism. He dismissed Mr. Epstein with the general principle, "Great art can only appear when the artist is animated by the spirit of some great order or scheme of life." I agree with this. Experience confirms it. We find that the more serious kind of art that one likes sprang out of organic societies like the Indian, Egyptian, and Byzantine. The modern obviously imposes too great a strain on an artist, the double burden of not only expressing something, but of finding something in himself to be expressed. The more organic society effects an economy in this. Moreover, you might go so far as to say that the imposition of definite forms does not

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confine the artist but rather has the effect of intensifying the individuality of his work (of Egyptian portraits). I agree then with his general principle: we all agree. It is one of those obvious platitudes which all educated people take for granted, in conversation and in print. It seems almost too comic for belief, but I begin to suspect from Mr. Ludovici's continued use of the word "I" in connection with this principle, that he is under the extraordinary hallucination that the principle is a personal discovery of his own. Really, Mr. Ludo, you mustn't teach your grandmother to suck eggs in this way. That you should have read of these truths in a book and have seen that they were true is so much to the good. It is a fact of great interest to your father and mother, it shows that you are growing up; but I can assure you it is a matter of no public interest.

Admitting then, as I do, that the principle is true, I fail to see how it enables Mr. Ludovici to dismiss Mr. Epstein in the way he does, on *a priori* grounds. The same general principle would enable us to dismiss every artist since the Renaissance. Take two very definite examples, Michelangelo and Blake, neither of whom expressed any general "scheme of life" imposed on them by society, but "exalted the individual angle of vision of minor personalities."

The whole thing is entirely beside the point.

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The business of an art critic is not to repeat tags, but to apply them to individual works of art. But of course that is precisely what a charlatan of the kind I have just described cannot do. It is quite possible for him, in each gallery he goes to, to find some opportunity of repeating his tags, but when (as he was in his book on Nietzsche) he is entirely outside the subject, when he is really unaware of the nature of the thing which artists are trying to do, when he gets no real fun out of the pictures themselves, then, when he is pinned down before one actual picture and not allowed to wriggle away, he must either be dumb or make an ass of himself. It is quite easy to learn to repeat tags about "balance," but put the man before one picture and make him follow with his finger the lines which constitute that "balance" and he can only shuffle and bring out more tags.

That a critic of this calibre should attempt to patronise Mr. Epstein is disgusting. I make this very hurried protest in the hope that I may induce those people who have perhaps been prejudiced by ignorant and biased criticisms to go and judge for themselves.

APPENDIX TWO

CATALOGUE OF THE WORKS OF JACOB EPSTEIN 1907-1931

Note

This catalogue, the only one in existence, is as accurate as the memory of the sculptor will allow. It has not been possible in a few cases to trace the ownership of works.

1. Signifies reproduced in *Epstein* by Bernard Van Dieren, Lane, 1920.
2. *Jacob Epstein*, Benn, 1925.

1907

Carving

Commenced Strand Statues

In Bronze

"ROMILLY" (1, 2.)
(Baby head)

ITALIAN PEASANT WOMAN (1)

MARIE RANKIN
(First version of the Irish Girl)

APPENDIX TWO

HEAD OF AN INFANT (I)

Purchased by H.M. Queen Alexandra

1908

Carvings

Carvings on the British Medical Association's
buildings, Strand

(See text, page 16 et seq.)

MATERNITY (I)

1909

In Bronze

NAN (I, 2)

(Bust with ear-rings and drapery round the shoulders)

At the National Gallery of British Art

(Tate Gallery)

(An undraped version is in the Eumorfopoulos
collection)

GERTRUDE

(Head and beginning of shoulders)

AN ENGLISH GIRL

(Head and shoulders)

Exhibited Leicester Galleries, 1924



THE CHRIST
1917-1919

APPENDIX TWO

1910

Carvings

EUPHEMIA

(Marble)

Owned by A. B. Clifton

SUNFLOWER

(Stone)

MRS. CHADBURNE

(Alabaster bust)

In Bronze

LADY GREGORY

(Bust)

At the National Gallery, Dublin

MRS. AMBROSE McEVOY (2)

(Bust to shoulders with medallion round the neck)

1911

In Bronze

THE DREAMER

(Small recumbent figure)

SEATED NUDE

(Small)

APPENDIX TWO

IRISH GIRL

(Head)

MRS. CLIFTON

(Bust)

MRS. FRANCIS DODD

(Head)

Owned by Francis Dodd

EUPHEMIA LAMB (1)

(Full bust)

Eumorfopoulos Collection

NAN (1)

(Head and neck. Hair parted centre and drawn
away from ears. Eyes closed)

In Plaster

(These works have not to the present date been
cast in bronze)

EUPHEMIA

(Life-sized draped figure)

GERTRUDE

(Life-sized torso)

APPENDIX TWO

1912

Carvings

THE OSCAR WILDE MEMORIAL (2)
(Commenced in 1909. In Hopton Wood stone)
At Père Lachaise Cemetery, Paris.
(See text on pages 19, 20.)

In Bronze

MRS. EPSTEIN
(Bust, leaning on one arm)

1913

Carvings

TWO DOVES (2)
(In marble)
Owned by John Alford, Esq.

CURSED BE THE DAY WHEREIN I WAS
BORN (1)

(In plaster, with colouring)
Collection of the late John Quinn

CARVING IN FLENITE
(Bas-relief on both sides of stone)

TWO CARVINGS IN FLENITE (1)
(24 inches high)
Collection of the late John Quinn

APPENDIX TWO

TWO CARVINGS IN FLENITE (1)

Collection of the late T. E. Hulme

MOTHER AND CHILD (1)

(In marble. The form of two heads. 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches
high)

Collection of the late John Quinn

In Bronze

THE ROCK DRILL (2)

(See text, page 45.)

1914

Carving

SECOND GROUP OF BIRDS

(Marble)

Owned by Mrs. Steyn.

1915

Carvings

THIRD GROUP OF BIRDS

(Marble: 29 x 26 inches)

Collection of the late John Quinn.

Illustrated in Catalogue,

(Page 192.)

APPENDIX TWO

In Bronze

BUST OF LORD FISHER (2)
Imperial War Museum

HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF HAMILTON
(1)
(Full bust to waist: arms to elbow)

THE COUNTESS OF DROGHEDA (1)
(Full bust)
Collection of the late John Quinn

(THE LATE) LT. T. E. HULME (2)
(Head)
Collection of the late John Quinn

IRIS TREE
(Head and neck)
Collection of the late John Quinn

MRS. HAMBLAY
(Head with coiled hair)

MARIE BEERBOHM
(Head and neck)

APPENDIX TWO

1916

In Bronze

MRS. JACOB EPSTEIN (2)

(Mask with long earrings)

Collection of the late John Quinn

FIRST BUST OF MEUM (1)

(In Manchester Art Gallery)

THE TIN HAT (1)

Imperial War Museum

W. H. DAVIES (1)

(Head)

Owned by the Hon. Evan Morgan

BERNARD VAN DIEREN (1)

(Head and neck, with collar)

Collection of the late John Quinn

AUGUSTUS JOHN (1)

(Head and neck)

Collection of the Viscountess Tredegar

MUIRHEAD BONE (1)

(Head)

At the Art Gallery, Dundee

APPENDIX TWO

1917

Carving

MOTHER AND CHILD

(Granite)

(Subsequently lost)

VENUS (1 and 2)

(Marble commenced in 1914. Height 8 feet)

Exhibited Leicester Galleries, 1920

Collection of the late John Quinn

In Bronze

SMALL HEAD OF MEUM

(Showing the ears)

Collection of the late John Quinn

AN AMERICAN SOLDIER (1)

(Head and neck, with open collar)

Exhibited Leicester Galleries, 1920

The Metropolitan Museum, N.Y.

MISS MARGARET NIELKA (1)

(Full bust)

(In her possession)

MISS DORIS KEANE

(Head and small portion of neck)

(In her possession)

APPENDIX TWO

MRS. ANDREWS

(Head)

(In her possession)

CLARE SHERIDAN

(Bust)

(In her possession)

SIR FRANCIS NEWBOLT, K.C.

HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH (1)

(Bust, with necklace)

ELIZABETH, daughter of Lady Howard de Walden (1)

(Baby head, with ruff)

JOSEPH HOLBROOKE (1)

(Head, neck and collar)

In Plaster

No bronzes have yet been cast from these works.

LARGE SELF-PORTRAIT

(Head in storm cap)

HARLAY MATTHEWS

(Head)

APPENDIX TWO

1918

In Bronze

MRS. JACOB EPSTEIN (1 and 2)
(Bust, with draped head and shoulders)
Exhibited Leicester Galleries, 1920

MASK OF MEUM (1 and 2)
Exhibited Leicester Galleries, 1920
Art Institute, Chicago

MARCHESA CASATI
(Mask)

MEUM WITH FAN
(Three-quarter-length figure, with arms and hands.
Commenced in 1916)
Exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, 1920
Owned by Mrs. Leopold Sutro

In Plaster

No bronzes have been cast from this
PEGGY JEAN AT THREE MONTHS
(Head)

1919

In Bronze

THE CHRIST (1 and 2)
Begun in 1917. Exhibited Leicester
Galleries, 1920. Owned by A. Cherry
Garrard. (See text, page 36 et seq.)

APPENDIX TWO

SERGT. DAVID FERGUSON HUNTER, V.C.(1)

(Full bust, open shirt, arms crossed)

(At the Imperial War Museum)

HÉLÈNE (1 and 2)

(Full bust. Arms to elbow. Hand detached)

Exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, 1920

NOREEN

(Head)

PEGGY JEAN SMILING

(Head at fourteen months)

In Plaster

No bronze casts have been taken from these works.

MRS. EPSTEIN WITH BAND ON HAIR

HEAD OF PEGGY JEAN AT ONE YEAR

1920

In Bronze

SELF-PORTRAIT

(Bearded head)

Exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, 1926

See Frontispiece

APPENDIX TWO

PEGGY JEAN ASLEEP (2)

(At 18 months. Head, shoulders, and clasped hands)

Exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, 1924

Owned by Hugh Walpole, Esq.

LILIAN SHELLEY (1)

(Bust to waist. Hands holding drapery)

Exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, 1920

Lent by W. Burrell to the Tate Gallery

BETTY MAY (1)

(Full bust, with arms crossed)

Exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, 1920

MARCELLE (1)

(Head)

The Coleman collection

Mlle. GABRIELLE SOENE

(Full bust. Drapery over shoulder, fastened in
centre)

Exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, 1920

In Plaster

CECIL GRAY

(Bust)

APPENDIX TWO

1921

In Bronze

GIRL FROM SENEGAL (2)

(Full bust)

Exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, 1924

Owned by R. Pulitzer

KATHLEEN (2)

(Bust)

Exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, 1924

Lent to the National Gallery of British Art by the
Contemporary Art Society

JACOB KRAMER (2)

(Bust)

Purchased in 1924 for the National Gallery of
British Art by the Contemporary Art Society

MIRIAM PLICHTE

(Full bust)

(See illustration, facing page 143.)

MIRIAM PLICHTE

(Head)

BETTY MAY

(Head)

APPENDIX TWO

HEAD OF PEGGY JEAN AT TWO YEARS

HEAD OF PEGGY JEAN AT TWO YEARS

(The two together form The Putti)

(Illustration, facing page 122.)

Exhibited Leicester Galleries, 1931

PEGGY JEAN

(Bust, with arms out. Two years old)

PEGGY JEAN

(Bust, with very curly hair. 2 years 4 months)

PEGGY JEAN LAUGHING

(Bust. 2 years 9 months)

Exhibited Leicester Galleries, 1924

PEGGY JEAN SAD

(Bust. 2 years 9 months)

Exhibited Leicester Galleries, 1924

1922

In Bronze

THE WEEPING WOMAN (2)

(Figure to waist, with clasped hands)

Leicester Galleries, 1924

At the City of Leicester Art Galleries

APPENDIX TWO

SELINA (2)

(Full bust. Arms to elbow)

Leicester Galleries, 1924

The Brooklyn Museum

LA BOHÉMIENNE

(Head and neck only. Cast from bust which is the first study of Dolores)

Leicester Galleries, 1931

The Art Gallery, Vancouver

FEDORA ROSELLI

(Large bust. Hair parted centre and braided over ears)

Leicester Galleries, 1924

OLD SMITH

(Head)

1923

Carving:

TWO ARMS (2)

(Marble. Hands clasped.)

Leicester Galleries, 1924

In Bronze

R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (2)

(Head)

Leicester Galleries, 1924

The Rutherford Collection

APPENDIX TWO

Study for Portrait of
HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH
(Head and neck, with collar)
Leicester Galleries, 1924)

Study for Portrait of
HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF
MARLBOROUGH
(Head)

EILEEN (2)
(Head and shoulders)

DOLORES (2)
(Head resting upon chin and hair)
Leicester Galleries, 1924

FEROSA RASTOUMJI
(Head and neck)
Leicester Galleries, 1924

OLD PINAGER (2)
(Head and hands)
Leicester Galleries, 1924
At the Art Gallery, Aberdeen

DOLORES (2)
(Full bust, with hands. Star-shaped ear-rings)
Leicester Galleries, 1924

APPENDIX TWO

RECLINING NUDE

(Dolores. Cut off below knees. Right hand over breast. Left hand at back of head)

Leicester Galleries, 1924

DR. ADOLF S. OKO

Leicester Galleries, 1924

Owned by Mrs. Chester Beatty

1924

In Bronze

JOSEPH CONRAD (2)

(Full bust in coat and collar. Owned by Muirhead Bone. See text, page 69)

ELSA LANCHESTER

(Head)

Leicester Galleries, 1924

(See illustration, facing page 112.)

EVE DERVICH

(Head and shoulders)

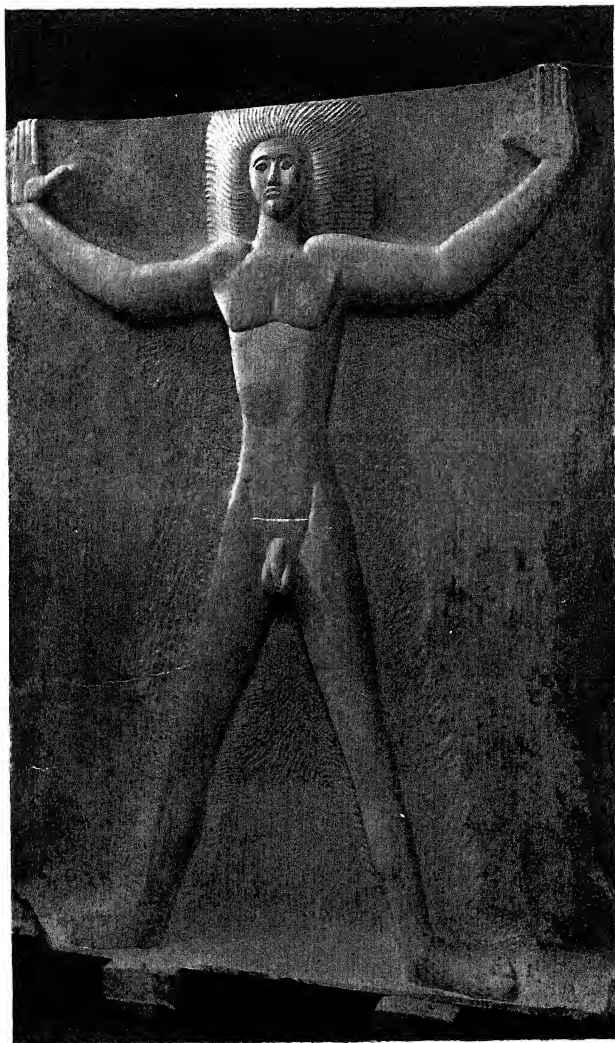
Leicester Galleries, 1924

THE SERAPH

(Head resting on chin)

Leicester Galleries, 1926

(See illustration, facing page 4.)



THE SUN GOD
(Carving in Hopton Wood Stone)
1910-1931



LYDIA
(The second bust)
1931

APPENDIX TWO

SHEILA

(Head)

Leicester Galleries, 1924

JACOB EPSTEIN (of Baltimore)

Baltimore Institute of Art

DAVID ERSKINE

(Bust)

Linlathen Library, N.B.

1925

Carvings

RIMA

(In Portland stone)

(The Bird Sanctuary, Hyde Park. Memorial to
W. H. Hudson. See text, p. 24 et seq., and
illustration, facing page 29.)

In Bronze

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH

(Half length in robes at Blenheim)

ENVER

(The first head)

Leicester Galleries, 1926

APPENDIX TWO

SUNITA

(The first head, with small piece of neck)

Leicester Galleries, 1926

SUNITA

(Bust)

Leicester Galleries, 1926

SYBIL THORNDIKE

(Bust)

(See illustration, facing page 34.)

PROFESSOR ALEXANDER, O.M.

(Head and shoulders)

Leicester Galleries, 1926

1926

In Bronze

THE VISITATION

(A study)

(Exhibited at the Leicester Galleries, 1926, as a study presented by the National Art Collection Fund to the National Gallery of British Art. See illustration, facing page 63.)

SUNITA

(Bust, with arm and necklace)

Leicester Galleries, 1926

APPENDIX TWO

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

(Head resting on beard)

RT. HON. RAMSAY MACDONALD, P.C.

(Bust)

(See illustration, facing page 68.)

Glasgow Art Gallery

Edinburgh Art Gallery

HON. STEPHEN TENNANT

(Bust, with arms. See illustration, facing page 84.)

In his possession.

C. P. SCOTT

Leicester Galleries, 1926

The Manchester Art Gallery

Mlle. MIJINSKA

(Hair parted centre, and chignon)

(Bust)

EDWARD GOOD ("Moysheh Oyved")*

(Head)

Leicester Galleries, 1926

PEARL OKO

PEGGY JEAN

(Bust, with long hair. 7½ years)

* For a charming but fanciful account of the sittings see Moysheh Oyved's *Gems and Life* (Benn, 1927).

APPENDIX TWO

JAMES KEARNS FEIBLEMAN

(Head and neck)

MIRIAM PATEL

(Large bust. See illustration, facing page 117.)

1927

In Bronze

THE MADONNA AND CHILD

Exhibited at the Ferragill Galleries, New York,
1927, and Knoedler Galleries, London, 1929
(See text, page 71, illustrations facing pages xi & 70.)

ENVER

(Head and neck, the second)

DAISY DUNN

(Full bust, hair cut short)

(Second version, also cast with long hair)

(See illustration, facing page 135.)

VIRGINIA

(Head resting on chin and neck)

Owned by Arnold L. Haskell

PROFESSOR JOHN DEWEY

(Bust)

(See illustration, facing page 21.)

At Columbia University

APPENDIX TWO

FRANZ BOAS

(Bust)

ZEDA

(Head only cast from a bust)

Leicester Galleries, 1931

1928

In Bronze

RT. HON. THE VISCOUNT ROTHERMERE,
P.C.

(Full bust)

Leicester Galleries, 1931

(See text and illustration, page 59.)

THE SICK CHILD

(Peggy Jean, aged 10)

(Head and shoulders, long hair and extended arm)

Owned by Arnold L. Haskell

(See text and illustration, page 61.)

A PORTRAIT

(Head and shoulders)

National Gallery of British Art

(See illustration, facing page 108.)

PAUL ROBESON

(Head)

Made in New York

(See illustration, facing page 139.)

APPENDIX TWO

1929

Carving

DAY AND NIGHT

(In Portland stone)

The New Underground Building, St. James's
(See text, page 43 et seq., and illustrations, facing
pages 50 and 55)

In Bronze

BETTY JOEL

(Head)

(Afterwards extended into bust: LA BELLE
JUIVE)

MRS. GERRARD

(Full bust)

MR. DAVID COHN

(Head)

1930

In Bronze

LA BELLE JUIVE

(Bust of Betty Joel. Ear-rings, necklace and
medallion)

Leicester Galleries, 1931

APPENDIX TWO

ISRAFEL

(Head and shoulders)

Leicester Galleries, 1931

(See illustration, facing page 94)

HANS KINDLER

(Head)

Leicester Galleries, 1931

ISOBEL POWYS

(Full bust, with draped scarf over shoulder)

Leicester Galleries, 1931

REBECCA

(Bust. Two long plaits of hair)

Leicester Galleries, 1931

MAY GOLDIE

(Bust)

(See text, page 25, and illustration, facing page 26)

Leicester Galleries, 1931

In Plaster

MARY BLANDFORD

(Head and neck, hair in two coils. Eyes looking down)

APPENDIX TWO

LYDIA

(Full Bust)

Exhibited Leicester Galleries, 1931

(See illustration, facing page 150)

ESTHER

(Bronze Bust)

(See illustration, page 55)

1931

Carvings

GENESIS

(Marble, commenced 1929)

Exhibited Leicester Galleries, 1931.

(See text, page 80, and illustration, facing page 82)

THE SUN GOD (1)

(Hopton Wood stone)

Commenced in 1910. Resumed in 1931

In Bronze

JOAN GREENWOOD

(Child head, curly hair)

Leicester Galleries, 1931

Owned by Lord Derby

(See text, page 26, and illustration, facing page 131)

RECLINING GODDESS

(Small nude figure on back, resting on elbows, cut off below knee)

APPENDIX TWO

ELLEN JANSEN

(Head)

(See illustration, facing page 10)

MR. M. BENDON

(Head)

LYDIA

(The second: bust with shingled hair)

ORIEL ROSS

(The third: full bust, with both arms)

MRS. HEATH

(Full bust)

DR. CRAMER

(Head and neck)

(See illustration, facing page 126)

NOTE: The photographs of sculpture in this volume were taken by Mr. Paul Laib.

I am indebted to Messrs. Brown and Phillips, of the Leicester Galleries, for help in compiling this catalogue.

A. L. H.

APPENDIX THREE

EXHIBITIONS HELD BY JACOB EPSTEIN

1913 *At 21 Gallery*

(The late T. E. Hulme's article, page 151, refers to this exhibition)

1917 *At the Leicester Galleries*

1920 *At the Leicester Galleries*

1924 *At the Leicester Galleries*

1926 *At the Leicester Galleries*

1927 *At the Ferragill Galleries, New York*

1928 *At 44, Duke Street*

1929 *At Knoedler Gallery*

1931 *At the Leicester Galleries*

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